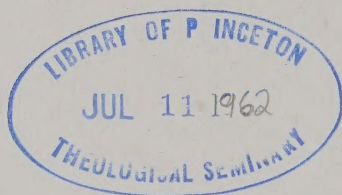


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THE CHURCH AND THE CHANGE

THE CHURCH AND THE CHANGE

*An initial study of the role of the Roman Catholic Church
in the changing American community*

BY

Rev. Robert G. Howes

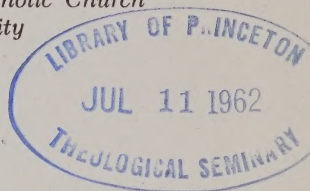
BISHOP'S REPRESENTATIVE FOR COMMUNITY RELATIONS
DIOCESE OF WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS

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✠ RICHARD CARDINAL CUSHING

Archbishop of Boston

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*“Truly it is of little avail to discuss questions
with nice subtlety, or to discourse eloquently
of rights and duties,
when all is unconnected with practise.
The times we live in demand action.”*

PIUS X
“E SUPREME APOSTOLATUS”

*"It seems to me that the function
of the Town-planning architect, who is especially trained
to find beautiful forms of expression
for practical requirements, is first to accept obediently
the instructions prepared for him by the sociologist,
the economist, the surveyor, and the engineer;
and then, within the limits prescribed,
to find beautiful forms of expression in the plan.
It is a task as difficult as it is inspiring, for which
he must prepare himself in whatever is his equivalent
to the prayer and fasting of the ancients.
If . . . the Town-planner can fuse the whole
into one imaginative creation,
beautifully expressing the life of the city community;
then, indeed, he will deserve well of his fellow men."*

RAYMOND UNWIN
IN "TOWN-BUILDING IN HISTORY" page 360.

*"I believe we as planners should strive
to be not technicians alone,
not alone the artists and scientists of planning,
but as well the urban humanists.
We cannot find the image of the urban humanist
on the drafting board or in the slide rule
or in the computer, important as these tools are.
We must seek him as the whole man,
the planner turned philosopher and humanist."*

CHARLES A. BLESSING, PRESIDENT
OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF PLANNERS IN
"JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF PLANNERS"
FEBRUARY 1960, page 4.

*"The formulation of these ends (i.e. for planning)
does not come within the province of science
so long as it remains faithful to its own salutary discipline,
it is rather the product of the arts
and the humanities, of religious vision
and moral aspirations. I come back to the need
of a common philosophy of human development."*

LEWIS MUMFORD
CITED BY BLESSING AS ABOVE

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FOREWORD

Some people are sure to think it strange that a priest should have written a book on city planning. Actually it makes very good sense.

Most of us have never stopped to ask ourselves just what a city should be, and what it should do. In our experience cities just grow. They are apt to begin at some spot which has certain clear natural advantages—good position, natural transportation facilities, ample food supplies, easy defense against attack, salubrious weather and so on. Once established, the cities merely spread, making their own suburbs as time and space demand.

Something like this may be true of the older cities of the world, and even most of the long established cities of our own country. There have been times and places however which saw at least portions of cities planned in advance—usually for reasons of beauty and general esthetic effect. This is not really what we mean today by CITY PLANNING. Beauty is only one element among many in the mind of the contemporary city planner—always of course an important one, but never the most important. Cities are planned for PEOPLE, they are planned to enhance the good life of those living within them, to make life healthier and happier, to contribute to human happiness in the widest sense by providing an environment appropriate to man's most compelling needs.

When we think of city planning in these terms we can see why the Church takes a special interest in this important new science. To build a city for men, we must know something about man and his nature, something about his personality and his aspirations, something about his problems and

his weakness, something about his desires and his destiny. On many of these topics the Church has something important to say that modern man neglects at his own peril; out of her long experience, predating nearly every city in which men now live, the Church draws a knowledge of human life and living which can contribute positively toward establishing that good society in which men may live at peace with themselves and their environment.

Father Howes is one of the very few priests in the United States who has made his formal studies in city planning at one of our great technological institutes and so he combines a knowledge of theology with those other sciences so necessary for sound and effective planning. This permits him to make a unique contribution, to be himself a kind of bridge or conduit, bringing from one side to the other the best fruits of each. Our professional communities are already too much divided one from the other; we have almost arrived at the point where the scientists in one field have no vocabulary with which to speak to scientists in another, and the differing disciplines are almost INCOMMUNICADO. We need as many bridges of communication as we can find so that exchanges of a productive nature can be effected and the knowledge gathered from so many directions can be put at the common service of man.

This is why I am happy to encourage the publication of these pages and to bring to the public at large the cogent reflections of a city planner who is also involved in that important world of moral analysis and judgment. The city that hopes to serve man and enhance his opportunities for the good life will have to be designed with the total view of man in mind, understanding that his spiritual needs are an essential part of his integral being. Readers will find Father Howes' "points" which emphasize this wider view both stimulating and provocative. His reflections cannot fail to introduce the

new student to an appreciation of the profound philosophy which must underlie successful planning and to encourage the seasoned planner to assay anew his own fundamental propositions.

I warmly recommend these pages and the apostolate which they describe; it is a new penetration of contemporary society with Christian principles and its salutary effect is needed and should not be long postponed. I predict a wide circulation for this important and inspirational work which so effectively opens the door on a vital area of our social concern.

Richard Cardinal Cushing.

Archbishop of Boston

“THE HEART OF THE MATTER”

A Preface

My task in these brief pages is a relatively simple but at the same time terribly complex task. I am concerned simply with the situation of the Roman Catholic Church in a changing American community. The complexity arises from the fact that neither the Church's own attitude nor the community itself has as yet jelled into final shape. The result—I shall probe as deeply and as frankly as I can but in the ultimate analysis I can serve but as a catalyst for further conference.

I select for analysis Church rather than churches. There are several reasons for this. I am a Catholic priest, first off. I have served my Church at every available level of operation. I have been a parish assistant; I have served in various diocesan assignments; I have taught in a Catholic college; I have served on the Board of Directors for two nation-wide Church organizations; I have functioned nationally in the office of the Christophers in New York City and in that of the National Conference of Catholic Charities in Washington, D.C.; I have done a pilot study on suburbia for The National Catholic Rural Life Conference and a pilot study on Urban Renewal for the National Conference of Catholic Charities; I am sponsor of “The Niagara Declaration”, a statement in August of 1960 by several prominent Catholics, lay and clerical, calling for further Church action in the civic crisis area; I am presently serving as Bishop's Representative for Community Relations here in the Diocese of Worcester in middle Massachusetts. There is no claim involved in any of this, no claim of infallibility or expertise. I do suggest that from this varied background I begin at least to be qualified to take a long look at the position of my Church in my community. In the course of my work, I have tried to maintain a close watch on activities of a similar nature in other churches. I am the first to confess that we Catholics have much to learn from our neighbors, Christian and Jewish, in this business of community relations. I shall be the first to extend the hand of common service to those of other faiths who in the days ahead may suggest joint action in civic crisis. Much of what will follow in this study will, *prima facie*, relate in proportionate measure

to other churches and synagogues. Nevertheless, I have thought it best to focus on my own Church, leaving parallels and dissimilarities to the judgment of the reader.

There are various methods in which this study might have been accomplished. It could have been chronological, featuring an effort to indicate development in Church thinking vis-à-vis the civic community through the centuries. It could have been theoretical with essays in political and human science. It might have balanced between choices, concerned with setting up various possible lines of Church procedure and then leaving a final determination to the reader. I have opted instead for a technique which I call Action Theory. There will be principles and possibilities in these next pages. Mostly, though, I propose to make a relatively crisp survey of each area of relationship between the Church and the changing community and to follow this closely with suggestions which, while not always fully detailed, at least are designed to lend themselves to action without the need for complex further deliberation. Action Theory, in other words, is theory on the threshold of and hungry for action.

With the goal in mind, then, that this study become a manual for action rather than a quiet thesis for library anonymity, I propose to incorporate it about another technique which I shall dub—the point system. Ideas which I consider significant will be detached from the regular flow of text material and emphasized as Points. At times these Points will represent more or less generally accepted facts; at times they represent simply the opinion of the author. I do not claim infallibility for any of them. Nor do they in any way state the official position of the Church. Nor do they in any way commit the Department of City Planning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology under which my own studies in City and Regional Planning have just been completed.

I shall try throughout this study to maintain a close balance between idealism and realism in estimating civic readjustment. As for the Church, the reader will sense all along in these pages my concern lest any of three things occur:

- i. the Church second secularism by abandoning the moral areas of civic readjustment and/or by speaking only innocuous platitudes when it does intervene.
- ii. the Church lose the sense of crisis in the changing American community by concentrating too heavily on details of difficulty and on problems of physical self-interest.
- iii. the Church with all the good will in the world but with lack of technical competence enter the arena of civic readjust-

ment with a naivete which can result in rash judgment or support for what are in fact narrowly partisan positions contrary to the common good of the community.

At this time I want to enumerate my personal gratitude to some of the many who have made this book possible. To His Eminence Richard Cardinal Cushing first of all for his generous interest in the somewhat unique suggestions I bring to the American Church, for his repeated encouragement, but most of all for the inspiration he has given all of us in the area of civic readjustment through the publication of his recent pastorals. My filial gratitude goes, too, to Their Excellencies Bishops John Wright and Bernard Flanagan, D.D. Under the first I began my studies in City and Regional Planning; under the second I have been named to fill one of the earliest diocesan offices of Community Relations in the American Church. I am grateful also to Rev. James Keller, M.M., for urging upon me daily the need to promote an ever widening apostolicity in the Church, this during the year I spent as his assistant with the Christophers in New York City. I am grateful to my instructors all along the line from the good Jesuits at Mt. St. James in Worcester to the faculty of City and Regional Planning at MIT. I want to say a special word of appreciation to that giant of American Catholic social action, Rt. Rev. Monsignor John O'Grady of the National Conference of Catholic Charities. More than to anyone else I owe to him the resolution which has led to the publication of this work. And, finally, my thanks to the Daughters of St. Paul whose wonderful apostolate permits me to place these pages before the American Church.*

* I have throughout this introductory chapter capitalized the word Church. In the body of the study, since my meaning is obvious, I shall not do so. In the body of the study, too, by personal preference I shall use the editorial we rather than the individual I.

THE CHURCH

If our country is truly religious, the influence of religion will permeate every part of our national life.¹

In this chapter, we focus on the church. There will of necessity be some history. Mostly, we are concerned with dimensions of the church vis-à-vis the community. We probe the width and length of the present, the possible reach of tomorrow. Some of our references will be internal to the church, many will not be. If the net result is something short of a portrait in depth, at least we hope to come up with a profile of basic position from which we next propose to embark on a correlative inquiry into the changing American community.

Our purpose, then, is conjunctive not polar. Neither church nor community is a total unto itself. The one exists in and is meant to inform the other. For all its technical freedom, the community is the laboratory where the moral wisdom of the church is tested. For all its other-worldliness, the church is the vision, the ideal and the sentinel of society. Putting church in this chapter and community in the next is a rational, not a real distinction.

The exact role of church in community is and always has been a difficult role to assess. "Twenty centuries of history bear witness to the fact that balance between the two is almost impossible to come by."²

¹ *Society's Need for Religion*. A statement of the Catholic Bishops of the United States, 15 November 1952.

² De Lubec, S.J., Rev. Henri. in *Church and State Through the Centuries*, Burns and Oates, London, 1954, p. 114.

From the first delicate distinction in the matter of "the coin of the tribute" to the Kennedy candidacy in America that balance has been controverted. Prince Bismark spoke of "political Catholicism." The Middle Ages teem with examples of conflict. Even in principle the problem of exact definition is serious. In fact, personalities, vested interests, angles of reference are almost always involved and the difficulties mount. When we talk of programs later, we cite some of this. Suffice it here to recapitulate a little that context in which the church now operates in the changing American community.

POINT ONE—*Outside of a very few areas, church influence in contemporary society is weak, this despite generations of church protest against "secularism."*

Seldom has this conclusion been more effectively and more dispassionately stated than in the "Middletown" books. In the first of these the Lynds note: ³

From both ministers and their congregations an outsider gets an impression of the ministers as eagerly lingering about the fringes of things trying to get a chance to talk to the men of the city who in turn are diffident about talking frankly to them.

And again: ⁴

The most marked changes in other sectors of the city's life have been predominantly changes in material culture . . . Teachers of religion, on the other hand, regarding the solutions of the problems with which they deal as largely discovered and established, sometimes tend to

³ Lynd, Robert S. and Lynd, Helen Merrell. *Middletown*, Harcourt Brace and Company, New York, 1929, p. 350.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 404.

subsume concrete details under categories, to blanket the network of factors involved in a situation under a general denunciation of 'sin' or an appeal to 'righteousness' or 'service'. Thus, while doctors and the Social Service Bureau are working at questions of public health, a leading minister tells Middletown that 'what Middletown needs is not eugenics, not better public health, but better education, but spiritual regeneration'.

In the second "Middletown" book, no improvement is noted: ⁵

The widening gulf between the theologically defined changeless and the obviously changing . . . The gap between religion's verbalizing and Middletown's life has become so wide that the entire institution of religion has tended to be put on the defensive . . . Middletown's churches appear to be forever bartering the opportunity for leadership in the area of change for the right to continue a shadowy leadership in the Changeless, as the church defines the latter . . . The churches of Middletown present the negative face of the community, or are silent, or talk such generalities that their position is equivocal.

More recently in a Canadian suburb, a sociological survey in depth concluded to a "radical decline of the church as a dominant institution." ⁶ Catholic houser Dennis Clark in fact but echoes something which has

⁵ Lynd, Robert S. and Lynd, Helen Merrell. *Middletown in Transition*, Harcourt Brace and Company, New York, 1937, pp. 311-313.

⁶ Seeley, John (et alii). *Crestwood Heights*, Basic Books Inc., New York, 1956, p. 355.

long been bothering churchmen who are frank with themselves when he speaks of the paucity of church influence in the changing urban community. "The lack of expression," he notes, "is incredible. There is no sustained apostolate of study and activity devoted to this field."⁷ Respondents in a parish in New York City were asked recently to estimate the relative importance of their priests in various roles. "Reformer", "social leader" and "civic leader" hit the very bottom of the "most important category", the very top of the "least important category."⁸

This reluctance, this unreadiness to enter the civic forums of commonwealth is not without foundation. The church has had reason in most every century to stand wary of "politics." And this long before Gambetta pointed a noisy finger at us in the last century and shouted—"Clericalism, that's the enemy." In our own time the civic morality aspects of the Gospel have been obscured by an unholy fear of controversy but also by an increasing involvement in what has been called brick and mortar Catholicism.

When all is said and done, however, we have little right to complain when the church is overlooked in the pursuit of commonwealth if a) it says nothing or b) what it does say is so general it is actually meaningless. The fault, if there is one, may lie with specification rather than with direction. Inertia is a disease which strikes all humankind irrespective of purpose—so is generalism. For generations now we have been treated to ringing negatives against secularism from our bishops

⁷ Clark, Dennis. *Cities in Crisis*. Sheed and Ward, New York, 1960, p. 134.

⁸ Schuyler, Rev. Joseph, S.J. *Northern Parish*, Loyola University Press, Chicago, 1960, p. 175.

and from our social action leadership. Yet the most favorable survey of the contemporary situation would have to conclude that we have not reached anything approaching perfection in positive practise of non-secularism. Some years ago a great man went up and down the world preaching civic enthusiasm. A decade back, that man, Patrick Geddes, made a major prophesy. Were he living today he might well have to confess his failure as prophet. Said Geddes: ⁹

Nor can the churches of all denominations much longer delay that comprehensive dealing with the field of civic renewal which has been promised and urged on all sides as in papal encyclicals, bishops' charges and moderators' addresses and in the Citizen Sunday discourses . . . As their entrance upon social renewal grows clearer in thought and more definite in action . . . before long they may be dealing more vitally with many civic problems than can the State and its administrators.

In the general silence, however, there have been voices of particular dedication. Listing some of them here by no means exhausts their number, nor their weight. Nor does it imply final judgment of their method or of their long-range effectiveness!

1. At the national and diocesan level, organizations affiliated with the National Catholic Welfare Conference and with the National Conference of Catholic Charities have been active in several areas of social concern for decades. There exist also an association of American Catholic sociologists and a National Catholic Social Action Conference. It is not presumptuous to

⁹ Geddes, Patrick. *Cities in Evolution*. Williams Norgate Ltd., London, 1949, pp. 122, 123.

suspect that leaders of these groups would be among the first to confess the need for greater integration and more personal responsibility among Catholics in this whole social action area.

2. Since the fall of 1954 Boston College, a major Jesuit institution, has sponsored a Seminar on the Problems of Metropolitan Boston. Drawing its membership from the Greater Boston business, political, financial and educational community, the Seminar meets four or five times a year and has been rated an outstanding success. It is administered by the Rev. W. Seavey Joyce, S.J., Dean of the School of Business Administration. Partly financed by a Ford Foundation grant, it functions through a staff of three full-time professionals and a Planning Committee of fifteen members. It takes special meaning in the context of this study from the fact that, while there are many excellent secular universities in the Greater Boston area, it is the Jesuit institution which has organized and maintains it. To the best of our knowledge, however, it has not provoked imitation at any other Catholic educational institution. An interesting and important side-light to the Seminar has been the moderation by Father Joyce of a very excellent series over Boston's educational channel, WGBH-TV, on metropolitan problems—the series entitled "City in Crisis." Further details on this effort may be had from the Seminar Research Bureau, Boston College, Chestnut Hill 67, Massachusetts.

3. Archbishop Patrick A. O'Boyle of Washington, D.C., has appointed a priest to sit down with civic authorities in the nation's capital and to represent the church at civic readjustment hearings and functions. Pursuant to our own study of urban renewal in the District, Archbishop O'Boyle twice went before his priests

on annual retreat and urged each of them to take personal interest in such hearings and functions in future.¹⁰

4. Chicago has an Archdiocesan Conservation Council which occupies itself with downtown urban change. It is headed up by energetic Very Rev. Monsignor John J. Egan and is located at 720 North Rush Street, Chicago, 11, Illinois. This Council has recently joined with its counterparts in the Protestant and Jewish communities to sponsor a major forum on housing in Chicago.

5. In Lent of 1960, His Eminence Richard Cardinal Cushing of Boston published his first pastoral letter. Its title was "The Christian and the Community." His Eminence wrote:

God did not take us out of the world and history to save us, but He entered history to save the world. Hence, we have an obligation to serve Him in the world where we find ourselves and within the framework of the history that falls to us.

6. At the St. Louis conclave of the National Catholic Social Action Conference in August 1959 and again at the Niagara University conclave of the same Conference in August 1960, a new workshop—"Housing and Urban Planning"—was programmed. It was so widely attended and provoked so much discussion that a new Conference department specifically to work this area has been activated. At national sessions of the National Conference of Catholic Charities in Milwaukee in 1959 and in New York City in 1960 there was wide agreement that the church has not yet mounted a

¹⁰ Monsignor George L. Gingras, pastor of St. Augustine's Church, 1717-15th St. N.W., Washington 9, D.C., is presently director of the Archdiocesan Office of Urban Renewal and Redevelopment.

proper apostolate in this area of civic readjustment. The main question raised at all of these meetings was not one of need but one of position. Where in the church does community relations belong?

7. In several communities, priests are presently serving on housing and/or redevelopment boards or are otherwise closely involved in civic readjustment. Like Boston's Rt. Rev. Monsignor Francis J. Lally for instance! When a Congressional Committee came to Portland, Maine, a few years back to inquire into Bayside urban renewal, one of the leading spokesmen for the citizens of the affected area was Rev. John Anderson, then of Cathedral parish. In Baltimore, Maryland, Rev. Joseph Connolly of St. Gregory's parish has been a most active student of civic readjustment. On New York City's troubled West Side, Rev. Henry Browne has represented a citizens' group before the Board of Estimates. Surely there are others. But the point is, perhaps, already made!

8. At Assumption College, a church institution in Worcester, Massachusetts, a series of seminars in the civic interest was held in the spring of 1959. Arranged and moderated by the author, and featuring such guest speakers as Mr. Edward Logue, now redevelopment chief in Boston, Massachusetts, and Professor Robert Wood of MIT, these seminars attracted wide interest throughout Greater Worcester. Final effort was a metropolitan symposium including the Mayor of Worcester and several suburban Selectmen. A prospectus indicating the scope of the seminars is appended to this study.

9. Several inquiries have appeared relative to church social action in the contemporary American scene. "Southern Parish", by the Rev. Joseph H. Fichter, S.J., has just been joined by "Northern Parish" by the Rev. Joseph B. Schuyler, S.J. Saluting the publica-

tion of Father Schuyler's work, Rt. Rev. Monsignor George G. Higgins, Director of the Social Action Department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference praised "American Catholic social scientists who are devoting their considerable talents to this all-important field."¹¹ Reference has already been made to Dennis Clark's excellent "Cities in Crisis". Rev. Andrew M. Greeley has come up with "The Church and the Suburbs." Articles are increasingly evident in the Catholic press in the general area of civic readjustment.

But these voices are relatively few, infrequent, separate. In one major renewal city, we were told by an ace renewal reporter for the local press—"The only time the church hollered was when it was hurting itself, never in the community interest." In suburbia, the overall silence is even more thundering. Clearly, with no guilt supposed or claimed, an impartial observer of the American church at this moment would have to conclude that we are not pulling our full weight in the changing community. It may well be true, as we imply above, that the picture is starting to change. The present reality, still, is unsatisfactory. Two factors combine to increase the urgency of action. We are now a mature church with time, talent and finances for a more integrated social action. Besides, the pace of change is so serious and so widespread that the need for moral direction now is immense. There are some who contend that this reticence has been a natural consequence of the presence of what have been more compelling social problems. This may be true when it comes to a historic assessment of our position. It is questionable if such reasoning any longer justifies failure to develop a coherent moral approach to the contemporary community.

¹¹ in his syndicated column: "The Yardstick", July 1960.

POINT TWO—*One major reason which in our judgment invites further church involvement in the community is church concern for the moral guidance of individuals.*

Sin is personal, so is society. Just as immorality is only sins multiplied and combined, so society is individuals multiplied and combined. When the group acts it is individuals acting. Somewhere along the line there is personal responsibility and therefore individual rightness or wrongness. It may be hard to discover but it's there all the same. "The social revolution will be moral or it will be nothing"¹²—says Peguy. Individuals have consciences. Individuals have moral obligations. When individuals move beyond the purely technical, right and wrong are frequently involved and where right and wrong are involved the church is involved.

There are at least two aspects to this personal mission of the church—one internal, the other external. Internally, the Christian standing on the Rock of Ages with sacramental nourishment and blessed assurance should be distinguished in his long-run individual life over the non-believer. If this be true, social action in what we feel to be the one true Christian church should evidence the foundation from which it starts. Pope Pius XII called attention to:¹³

the believer's duty to take his share, generously, courageously and according to his station and capacity in questions that a tormented and agitated world has to solve in the field of social justice.

The Bishops of America were equally precise:¹⁴

¹² Peguy, Charles. in *A Treasury of Catholic Thinking*, edited by Ralph L. Woods, Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York, 1953, p. 275.

¹³ Christmas Message, 1948.

¹⁴ 1933 in *Catholic Social Principles*, edited by Rev. John F. Cronin, S.S., Bruce Publishing Company, Milwaukee, 1950, p. 576.

Catholic lay leaders in great numbers . . . must be informed, fearless and capable of stating simply and clearly the position of the church on every vital question of today which has a moral aspect.

And again: ¹⁵

The crisis is at hand. Today every Christian must face the full Christian vision with no thought of compromise (and) must seek vigorously to live it . . . The essential connection between religion and good citizenship is deep in our American tradition.

"I have come to put fire on earth", says the Master. Christians are meant to shovel coals of courage and light into the engines of society. Maynard puts it: ¹⁶

No claim can be advanced that Catholics are better than other people; but they do have the advantage of that vision of the Church which looks at all human concerns not merely in their immediate aspects but as something world-wide and covering the centuries—in other words *sub specie æternitatis*.

But this so far is a matter of internal leadership and interior witness. Even beyond the circle of liturgical believers, if true to its universal mission, the church must indicate the rightness or the wrongness of individual action in the socio-civic context. It is no idle circumstance, for instance, that Canon Law requires the pastor to concern himself with all who live within the boundaries of the parish and not alone with "the

¹⁵ *Religion and Citizenship*. A statement by the Catholic Bishops of the United States, 1948.

¹⁶ in *Church and State Through the Centuries*. Op. Cit., p. 22.

faithful." Rev. John La Farge, S.J., puts this exterior apostolate thus: ¹⁷

The Church has not the function of telling people how to run their business; but it has the right and duty to tell businessmen what is right and wrong in the conduct of business.

That great historian of the Nineteenth Century, Rev. Raymond Corrigan, S.J., expressed the metes and bounds of church interest in directing individual morality in these words: ¹⁸

The Church . . . has no direct interest in markets or road building or other purely civic affairs. But the subjects of the State and its rulers as well and society as a whole, are bound to acknowledge and worship the Divine Creator of their being. Individuals and groups of individuals are bound to keep the moral law. And the Church in the discharge of her duties not only may, but must insist, whenever she can make her voice heard, on the observance of these obligations, positive and negative.

In our day this need for moral direction in both the internal and the external forums is doubly imperative. Values have broadened out till in some cases pragmatism seems to be the reality and principle the facade. We have come into a sort of socio-civic indifference. Once sharp distinctions are blurred. Expedience, loud conformity to non-conformism, self-expression—these rather than a fixed moral code seem to rule much of contemporary social debate.

¹⁷ in *A Treasury of Catholic Thinking*. Op. Cit., p. 121.

¹⁸ Corrigan, S.J., Rev. Raymond. *The Church in the Nineteenth Century*, Bruce Publishing Company, Milwaukee, 1938, p. 299.

Admittedly there are difficulties in any effort on our part to translate principles into specific moral directives. Within ourselves in some important areas (e.g. vis-à-vis labor legislation) there is significant discord. The point still remains, however we solve our own problem, the church must speak up when individual consciences are troubled and, most certainly, there are areas in the changing American community where the Christian conscience is (or, perhaps, the expression often is more accurate—should be) troubled!

POINT THREE—*A second major reason which in our judgment invites further church involvement in the community is the need in a widely selfish society for a continuing statement and defence of the common good.*

In human affairs there is the common good, the well-being of the state or nation; there is also a human good which does not lie in the community, but is personal to each man in himself; not, however, that it is privately profitable to the exclusion of others.

St. Thomas Aquinas¹⁹

There is perhaps no more notable casualty in modern American society than the common good. Some of the tragedy seems to involve neglect and ignorance. Some of it seems to involve premeditated selfishness on the part of individuals and groups. All of it, in a time when we need most seriously to ponder our domestic as well as our world future, is unfortunate. There is nothing wrong, of course, with pursuit of the private good. Only when it becomes immoderate, when it interferes with the larger good of society as a whole does

¹⁹ in *A Treasury of Catholic Thinking*. Op. Cit., p. 127.

it become intolerable. Such a situation we strongly suggest exists in America today.

To spell out what we mean in terms of civic readjustment, consider this definition of suburbia: ²⁰

To the real-estate promoter, the fringe is an area to be exploited . . . to land-use planners it is an area of rapid population growth, unrestricted subdivision, antagonistic land uses and spreading rural slums. To city officials it represents a sizeable proportion of their daytime population escaping tax and legal jurisdiction; to country officials it is a new mass population troubled by the conflicts of rural nostalgias and urban appetites and straining an antiquated government structure to the breaking point.

The same fragmentation of commonwealth seems to operate in core city. The big picture disintegrates into a patchwork of conflicting perspectives and diverse, private purposes. With masterful understatement one recent expert concludes that "self interest is at the crux of the bargaining process in many community ventures." ²¹ There are business interests at stake, real estate interests, highway interests, minority group interests, political interests. The 16th century poet may have been exaggerating but what he wrote then seems all too often applicable today in core city: ²²

And this is a city
In name but in deed
. . . hell without order

²⁰ Martin, Walter. *The Rural Urban Fringe*, Oregon University Press, Eugene, Oregon, 1953, p. 1.

²¹ Hunter, Floyd (et alii). *Community Organization; Action and Inaction*. North Carolina University Press, Chapel Hill, 1956, p. 250.

²² in Mumford, Lewis. *The Culture of Cities*. Harcourt Brace and Company, New York, 1938, p. 72.

I may it well call . . .
Where everyman is for himself
and no man for all.

In short, both in Our Town and Down Town, the common good can with pitiful ease get lost in the shuffle to private objectives.

The pattern of operation in this prostration of commonwealth is relatively simple. In most matters of civic readjustment, there is involved both a public good and a number of private possibilities. Those alert to these private possibilities are usually well organized. They know the ropes and the back doors of power. With specific goals, they move swiftly and straight. On the other, or public, side, there is often only apathy or, at best, a sort of amateur and ambiguous oratory! If the public benefit happens to coincide with the private purpose, fine. If not, the common good can suffer and suffer bad. For instance, describing the defeat of a master zoning plan for Montgomery County, Maryland, one planning expert said the loss had been engineered: ²³

by a planned campaign of delays, misrepresentations and protests organized by a small group of self-interested land speculators, real-estate brokers, home-builders and small minded . . . machine politicians.

Speaking of urban renewal in Washington, D.C., Conrad Wirth, Director of the National Park Service and a member of the National Capital Planning Commission, called bitter attention to similar conflict between the public good and the private purpose: ²⁴

²³ Gutheim, Frederick in *The Crack in the Picture Window*, by John Keats, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1956, pp. 192, 3.

²⁴ cited in *The Washington Star*, 14 December 1955.

This is a program of vital importance to the Capital City . . . It is important, therefore, that time be allowed for full consideration of these proposals . . . Yet pressures are strong and constant for haste and for immediate action on this proposal or that blueprint. These pressures are very great and they often come from the most unexpected places. Experts . . . with skills in the realms of concrete and currency—these special skills are usually accompanied by a vast knowledge of ways and means of by-passing those whose interests and vision extend beyond the immediate project into which concrete can be poured.

The list could be lengthened, but the picture is already clear.

Seldom in history has there been greater need for steeples of common good than in the renewing American city today, than in the contemporary American suburb. Too often suburbia seems to be rather a loose association of selfishnesses than a mosaic of real communities, patchworks of profit rather than premeditated civic order. Too often, when you penetrate the oratory, our core cities seem to consist of vast and lethargic majorities, vocal mayors, plus minority interests out for all the trade will bear when it comes to profit-through-change. Who speaks for the commonwealth in twentieth century America? Where are the voices of self-restraint, of teamwork and civic fellow-feeling we knew in our national yesterdays? Who speaks for the common good in a changing community? Who better, more naturally, more consistently, than its churches?

The need of this generation, in short, is for a rebirth of the idea of service and the idea of common-

wealth. We have become too much and too often a people of money measure and unashamed individual and collective selfishness. Perhaps the major task of the church in this whole area of civic readjustment is to recall us loudly to the common good.

POINT FOUR—*A third major reason which in our judgment invites further church involvement in the community is our apostolic calling and our belief in the existence and total relevance of a natural law.*

If, indeed, the church is the salt in the meat, the leaven in the mass, apostles in a world that needs saving, it has no alternative but to go, strongly and continuously, to that meat, that mass, that world. Its purpose, in the words of Pope Pius X, is “to restore all things in Christ.” Surely good housing for all, social order, civic hope—these are integral parts of such a restoration. Without them the mandate of the church in contemporary society is incomplete, is inadequate. With them the church takes new and vibrant meaning in the changing community. And such meaning is obviously in accord with the proclaimed task of the church in America: ²⁵

In the midst of human society, God has set His Church . . . To the Church Christ has given the divine mandate to teach all things . . . The divine mandate permits no curtailment of the law no matter how diverse the circumstances and conditions under which man lives and works, nor any compromise with the full measure of its application to human conduct. The

²⁵ A statement of the Catholic Bishops of the United States, 7 February, 1940.

obligation comprehends the actions of man in his private and public life as an individual and as a member of human society.

The difficulty seems to be, again, that with all the words before us we have, for one reason or another, failed to suit our deeds to them or our programs to our propositions. The time is definitely here when we must leave our snug little shelters and our increasingly comfortable plant and pitch into the battle. Either this or a tacit relinquishment of the field to the secularists!

Three factors in our apostolic thinking combine to require our further involvement as a church in the changing American community. First, we hold deeply to the principle of a natural law. We believe there exists in man and in his society an order, a disposition much of which human reason can discover and to which the human will must be accommodated in terms both of time and of eternity. But this law, if it is to be more than loving generalities, needs interpretation, needs firmness. Surely, the changing community no more escapes the reach of natural law than does labor or education. Fundamental moral decisions, ultimate goals in planning—both require directives in the context of that law. Second, we have always held that Sunday's religion must encompass Monday's work and Saturday's play. Life by compartments is secularism pure and simple. A religion which can be put on and off like jewelry or tennis shoes is a religion which really doesn't matter much and will certainly matter less as time goes on. An apostle is a messenger, an ambassador, but each message as each diplomatic mission has its term as well as its point of origin. Third, most Catholics would probably concur that, whatever its faults, the American system of government offers one of the most happily

adequate political and religious situations in the world. With the planet divided into two massive power groups, the success of our democracy assumes a significance far beyond its absolute subjective merit. Among the faults, we readily concede, are inadequate housing, race inequities, lack of concern for the common good. Even so our imperfection is relatively small alongside the hope we hold for all mankind. As a nation, particularly in times as desperate as these, we've got to make sure that the faults diminish and that the hope is increasingly less limited. Nor can the church afford to stand absent from such an effort. If it does it risks much. One of the most consistent complaints young foreign intellectuals are apt to make when they come here from developing areas of the world is that back home religion does not concern itself with the corporal and civic welfare of the people. Therefore, they say, there is very real danger that once strongly religious people may leave their temples and flock to ideologies which, though anti-religious, at least offer apparent progress in the comforts of life. We may not face the same danger here. But the point remains. Unless we Christians can demonstrate that our type of society is geared to the social and civic needs of our people, we at least jeopardize the reality of religion in our democratic future. Apostolically, as well as practically, we must be concerned to make democracy on these shores so strong, so pure, so ample that it will stand taller than foreign hatred and domestic subversion. The transition from Shinto to Zengakuren in Japan was disturbingly quick for an important element of the population. We want no repetition of the mistakes which facilitated that transition here.

With awareness of high purpose, then, with confession of a considerable gap between our words and our practise in American society today, the church confronts powerful reasons which seem to suggest further civic involvement. These reasons as noted in this chapter, are internal to us as a church. But, again, we are not polar in our reference, we are conjunctive. In the next chapter we explore the other term of conjunction—the changing community.

THE CHANGE

I returned to the United States recently after a long absence . . . I could not recognize approaches to the university town where I had lived for several years and . . . when I drove into farming areas to visit friends I could not find their farms. Villages had become cities. Small, sleepy county seats had taken on an industrial sprawl. Regional centers had sprawled far beyond their former boundaries. New suburbs had sprouted from the countryside, and new highways connected them in a metropolitan complex.¹

Studies of the community as an experience in political science are numerous. We do not propose here to ditto those studies. We are concerned with the fact, something of the psychological significance of change, not so much with the political science content of it.

At this point we take a quick look at the demographic course of the national community as a whole. We proceed, next, to propose a disjunction of ideologies applying to the individual community. There will be some statistics. There may well be reasonable debate about some of our conclusions. Our concern remains to present as factually as possible—the changing American community. We shall phrase our presentation in that detail and with that decision which we feel to be necessary for the average churchman as he confronts the community relations apostolate. Advisedly, therefore, there must be a neutrality here, a certain impassion.

¹ *Land*. The Yearbook of Agriculture, 1958, GPO, Washington, D.C., 85th Congress, 2d Session, House Document No. 280, p. 568.

Such an approach will not and is not meant to please those who plead at the bar of public opinion for this or that sector of the changing American community. Any other approach, however, is unworthy of the mission we are suggesting. If our own personal feeling shows through here and there, the overall framework remains objective.

From Plymouth to Levittown we Americans have come a long road. Generally speaking up to World War I it was a slow, relatively straight road. The change from generation to generation, so far as it affected the community pattern of our people, was mostly gradual, a gentle horizontal spreading, a growing immigration, a steadily declining rural majority. Through all our early years as a nation, our traditions were rural traditions.²

The free-enterprise system grew out of an early dream of a nation sustained chiefly by and for devout, free, independent, and home-owning farmers. With its roots planted in this dream, the United States has become the envy of the world, in its strength, love of liberty, and in its standard of living . . . All students of the growth of the American civilization seem in agreement that the family farm established the economic foundation for the liberties and the enterprise, and the national conscience, that are the heritage of the United States.

From the Minute Men to the first 4-H clubbers, the small at least semi-rural community was the majority

² Sub-Committee on Family Farms, United States House of Representatives, GPO, Washington, D.C., #8124, 1 August 1956, p. 1.

experience of our people. From Governor Bradford to Baker Brownell there have always been voices among us praising the virtue of a basically agrarian, small-scope democracy. Congress and the Presidency, through most of our history as a nation, have been filled with farmers, frontiersmen, planters, patroons. When George Washington called agriculture "the most healthful, most useful and most noble employment of man", he probably echoed the sentiment of by far the majority of his compatriots. Thomas Jefferson termed "those who labor in the earth . . . the chosen people of God." His terse postscript is even more typical of his ruralism: "The mobs of great cities add just so much to the support of pure government as sores do to the human body." Daniel Webster was equally specific:

Unstable is the future of the country which has lost its taste for agriculture. If there is one lesson of history that is unmistakable it is that national strength lies very near the soil.

Until the 1850's and the Civil War, it even seemed for a time as if this type of patient, intimate, lower case democracy might survive as the controlling fact of our people. Then all at once the agrarian South lay in ruins. And into the great industrial areas of the North an army of humanity began to march. Foreigners and farmers' children—the history of that march over the past century is the history of a revolution in community!

Again, we need not explore that revolution in depth here. Its course is amply chronicled elsewhere; its effects are part of common national observation. Suffice it briefly to draw the pattern. The basic statistics are self-explanatory:

Population of the

United States	URBAN	RURAL	(ON FARMS)
1790	5.1%	94.9%	
1900	39.7%	60.3%	
1910	45.6%	54.3%	(34.9%)
1920	51.2%	48.8%	(30.1%)
1950 ³	64.0%	36.0%	(16.6%)

A quick look at one decade indicates the pace of change:

Cities in the United

States with a Popula- tion of.....	12,000- 20,000	20,000- 40,000	45,000- 75,000
1880	76	45	23
1890	107	91	39

In the same decade, Chicago doubled in size; the Twin Cities trebled; Detroit, Milwaukee, Columbus and Cleveland jumped by about 80% each. It's true most of these were in the path of national growth, but the increase still seems massive.

By the end of World War I the problem was beginning to attract notice. One commentator called attention to what he termed—"A bursting of city boundaries in the booming 1920's."⁴

This, he continued,:⁴

brought unguided growth to the fringes of cities, but it was gentle compared to what was to come later. Urban expansion became an explosion after the Second World War. All over the country new forces transformed rural communities. Good roads and automobiles permitted city people to spread out over the coun-

³ In the 1950 Census, the definition of "urban" was changed to include all places of 2500 people or more plus the densely settled "urban fringe" around cities of 50,000 or more.

⁴ *Land. Op. Cit.*, p. 524.

tryside. Farm people in great numbers found employment and new homes in and near urban centers . . . New communities took shape in forms that could not be foreseen, as pups of unknown ancestry may become dogs of unexpected size and shape.

By 1950, so greatly had the in-migration from the farms, the out-push from the cities and the cross-migration from Europe and Canada changed the land, a new federal census category was created to handle the situation. The Standard Metropolitan Area premised a city of 50,000 or more people plus contiguous and at least partly dependent land areas. It took us forty years from the Revolution to achieve our first city of 100,000. In less than a century and a half since then we have reached the point where there are today no less than 189 Standard Metropolitan Areas across the nation. Within these areas between 1950 and 1955 our population increase outdistanced growth in the non-metropolitan sections of the country at a rate of 49 to 1! One expert puts it this way:⁵

It is estimated that between 1950 and 1957 when the population of the country grew by . . . 15 million, the metropolitan areas received 90 per cent of the total increase. If these trends continue—and everything indicates that they will . . . by 1975 . . . two-thirds of the national population will be ‘metropolitan.’

Clearly, though percentage-wise most of our land remained open, we had ceased to be a predominantly or even a widely “rural” people in the old sense of that term.

⁵ Howard, John T. in *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Philadelphia, September 1957, p. 32.

Within the Standard Metropolitan Areas, however, a counter-revolution was at work. It was no longer an ebullient core city which took the bulk of the growth. It was the outskirts, the fringe, suburbia! Even in the relative adolescence of "the exploding metropolis", as these figures indicate, centrifugalism had replaced centripetalism as far as many of our most important cities were concerned: ⁶

Growth in the Decade 1940-1950	Core City	Remaining Metro Area
Boston	4.0%	11.5%
Chicago	6.6%	31.2%
Los Angeles	31.0%	69.8%
New York	5.9%	19.4%
Philadelphia	7.3%	26.1%
St. Louis	5.0%	33.8%
Washington, D.C.	21.0%	117.1%

Two instances suffice to fill out the image. In 1900, 65 out of every 100 Chicagoans lived within four miles of the center of their city. By 1950, more than 75 out of every 100 lived more than four miles from the center. Likewise, in Philadelphia, where 33% of the population had lived within two miles of the city center back in 1900 by 1950 40% lived further than five miles from it. ⁷

Between 1950 and 1955, our suburbs grew at a rate seven times faster than our core cities. ⁸ A preliminary survey in 1959 indicates a big city gain since 1950 of .5%, a suburban gain of 44%. ⁹ First reports from the current

⁶ Cole, William. *Urban Society*, Riverside Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1958.

⁷ Owen, Wilfred. *The Metropolitan Transportation Problem*, The Brookings Institute, Washington, D.C., 1956, pp. 271, 272.

⁸ Williams, Donald A. Administrator of the Soil Conservation Service, USDA, address at Beltsville, Maryland, 21 June 1956.

⁹ *The Boston Sunday Herald*, 5 June 1960, p. 49.

(1960) Census estimate that the pace has in fact accelerated, that many a core city is stationary or actually declining, that suburbia continues to boom ahead. For instance: ¹⁰

Population Growth in the Decade 1950-1960	Core City	Total Metro Area
Detroit	170,000	1,000,000
New Haven	15,000	75,000
New York	330,000	1,650,000
Philadelphia	130,000	500,000

In the past ten years, the nation showed a population gain of 26,500,000. 17,000,000 of this represents "suburban satellites." Suburbs mushroomed at twice the rate of core cities. Today some 53,250,000 Americans live in suburbia as against some 36,000,000 a decade ago. The nation's capital offers one last and compelling example:

Population of	Core City	Suburbs	Total
Washington SMA			
1940	663,000	305,000	968,000
1950	802,000	662,00	1,464,000
1956	840,000	1,044,000	1,884,000
1960	748,000	1,221,000	1,969,000

An interesting side-light to the whole picture is this remark by an agricultural expert in 1956: ¹¹

Still more significant to those of us concerned with agriculture is the fact that growth in the outlying parts of the metropolitan areas was greatest in the territory classified as rural in 1950.

¹⁰ *The Worcester Evening Gazette*, Worcester, Massachusetts, 9 June 1960, p. 6.

¹¹ Williams, Donald A., *Op. Cit.*

The change, in short, is marked and major. From our rural beginnings, the nation has moved through a great gathering in of cities to an outward sprawl which seriously threatens at once our traditional urbanism and our traditional ruralism. Such change cannot, obviously, occur without most serious implications for our civic institutional and moral situation. When caterpillars cease and butterflies begin, instinct determines the transition. There is no such easy solution to the problems of the changing American community in our time. There needs to be now some thorough, calm and yet urgent re-thinking of our national purposes and of our local and non-local civic machinery.

One reason demanding such an effort is a certain continuing confusion in the approach of most Americans, professional and otherwise, to the whole problem. Suppose we pause for a time with this confusion, though its existence is one of the motivating forces behind and will be noted often in our entire study.

Census terminology, for instance, remains woefully inappropriate. This is not a semantic or a purely technical complaint, though one expert notes that "the student of communities always has cause to be dissatisfied with census materials."¹² There are but three categories still—urban (now defined as we have indicated above), rural non-farm, and rural farm. Except when it reaches far out into the further hinterland, then, the great change in the life of our people does not emerge from the general Census classification. Here's an example of how this confusion operates. A man who moves his family from a downtown three-decker in Boston to a five acre plot of land in suburban Lincoln

¹² Duncan, Otis D. and Reiss, Albert J. *Social Characteristics of Urban and Rural Communities*, John Wiley and Sons, New York, 1956, p. xi.

is still listed as "urban." If the same man moves a few miles further out, say to suburban Boxborough, he becomes "rural non-farm" even though in either case, he continues to commute to work on the Golden Circle of Boston's circumferential Route #128. Admittedly, there has to be some cut-off point. Admittedly, if it were just a matter of words, one could ignore the whole business. In fact such reporting pre-judges suburbia and lends itself to a good deal of ideological gerrymandering. For the untrained observer the decision is already made. The residual rural aspects of much of suburbia, in environment, in ideals, in people, are submerged. The suburb is urban; its growth is rightfully pocketed in the urban bag when it comes to propaganda and claim on the public monies.

The question emerges, and it's a highly significant one—what kind of bulge is it we're actually faced with? Is it in fact "urban?" Is it "rural?" Is it "rurban?" Is it a "third force?" Is it "urban area?" Has it for all its looseness a reality of its own? Are its people refugees or colonists? Only two things seem certain at the start. Numbers and influences on both sides of suburbia—the downtown side and the rural farm side—are on the wane. Only the exceptional big city keeps pace with national growth. Less than one in every twelve American workers is presently employed in agriculture. Where in 1947, the farm labor force (including proprietors) numbered 8,300,000, today farm employment has dropped to an estimated 5,600,000.¹³ In 1930 there were 4,700,000 commercial farms in the United States; there were fewer than 3,000,000 in 1958.¹⁴ Mayor Lee of New Haven keeps reminding us periodically that there are

¹³ *United States News and World Report*. 13 June 1960, p. 96.

¹⁴ *Land. Op. Cit.*, p. 303.

more people in the slums of our cities than on all our farms. The second certainty is that the bulge, for all its amorphousness, grows daily bigger. Unfortunately neither the embattled old residents of Our Town nor the confirmed apologists for Down Town seem to accept it at face value. Some people are innocent in the great confusion. The stakes are high, however, and it would be naive itself to suppose that there is something less than honesty in none of it. Involved importantly are the monies and the prejudices of an urbanism which, if the bulge is partly "rural", has been tried and found largely wanting and the nostalgia of a ruralism in retreat. The tragedy remains, whatever its cause and course: it seems unconscionably difficult for many of us to up-date either our thinking or our techniques to accommodate patent reality!

But statistics and general argument tell only part of the story of the changing American community. Over centuries humanity has developed two great ideals, two mystiques—the one rural, the other urban. Our times propose a third, and a fourth. To understand the contemporary community we have first to probe through some of the experience of the race with each mystique.

I. *The Rural Mystique*

*Artistic Lady:*¹⁵ Mr. Webb, is there any culture or love of beauty in Grover's Corners?

Mr. (Editor) Webb: (Smiling) Well, ma'am, there ain't much . . . not in the sense you mean . . . But maybe this is the place to tell you that we've got a lot of pleasures of a kind here: we like the sun comin' up over the mountain in the

¹⁵ Wilder, Thornton. *Our Town*.

morning, and we all notice a good deal about the birds. We pay a lot of attention to them. And we watch the change of the seasons: yes, everybody knows about them.

First in time, first in numbers since it still involves the overwhelming majority of human living on the planet, the Rural Mystique goes back to Eden. It ranges all the way from the sheep and the shepherds of Israel to the Montana Study in our own day.

Definition is difficult here as elsewhere in our study. Suppose we by-pass extremes in both the rural and the urban category. Suppose we include as rural the small town, even the larger town with an open space and/or agricultural environ. More is involved in rural than the isolated farm. Neither rural nor urban can rightly be restricted in this generation to the stock images of centuries ago. One expert says: ¹⁶

The rural community does not mean rustic or bucolic or small. It is the place of undetermined size—town, village and open area that is held together by neighborly associations in the school, the church and the common interests of living together.

Ebenezer Howard, preacher of Garden Cities, is more lyric: ¹⁷

The country is the symbol of God's love and care for men. All that we are and all that we have comes from it. Our bodies are formed by it; to it they return. We are fed by it, clothed by it, and by it we are warmed and sheltered.

¹⁶ Hatch, Earle. *Rebuilding Rural America*.

¹⁷ Howard, Ebenezer. *Garden Cities of Tomorrow*, Faber and Faber, Ltd., London, 1946, p. 48.

On its bosom we rest. Its beauty is the inspiration of art, of music, of poetry. Its forces propel all the wheels of industry. It is the source of all health, all wealth, all knowledge.

There is an essential poetry in the Rural Mystique. Beyond this its proponents, and they have been many in every age, separate out several areas in which country life has in their judgment the advantage over city life:

A. *Reverence*—Farming's the closest thing to the Lord you can do. You work with the things the Lord has made and put. The rains don't come and this dies or that dies and you don't make with this and you do make with that. It's just you and Him.¹⁸

Visible creation has always, for better or for worse, figured in "religion." But, wholly apart from paganism, closeness to visible creation has been equated by much of mankind with closeness to the Invisible Creator. It's this way:¹⁹

Rural life is holistic and conjunctive in tendency rather than analytic. It hangs together. In the greater unity of experience of rural life, there is an implicit poetry of action, an unsaid spiritual divination that makes for firmness in human character.

The naturalness of it, the dependence of the human on the providence of the divine, the tangible evidence of growth and seasons—all these operate to produce a sense of reverence. Another ruralist writes:²⁰

¹⁸ Moore Joe: Libertyville, Tennessee. *Star Farmer* of 1955.

¹⁹ Brownell, Baker. *The Human Community*, Harper and Brothers, New York, 1950, p. 67.

²⁰ Tate, H. Clay. *Building a Better Home Town*, Harper and Brothers, New York, 1954, p. 67.

One cannot be a part of the passing seasons, watch the reproductive miracles of plant and animal life, feel the dependence upon the elements beyond man's understanding and control without having a keener sense of the presence of a superior force in the universe . . . And in that presence man finds a serenity, a purpose, a meaning in life that is not found in Time's Square.

Time and again, church conferences and church leadership have confirmed this sentiment. As, for instance: ²¹

The country is above all, space where one can be at ease, it is healthful air in abundance. it is the free flow of light. It is also the unfolding of vegetable and animal life in its innumerable forms. Thus the country constitutes the most natural environment one could dwell in; be he farmer or not, there he will find satisfying rest . . . This physical and psychological climate is healthy. Moreover the sight of nature, with the marvelous mysteries of life, tends to stir up the idea of order in the world and of the omnipotence of the Creator. Rural life is in harmony with the religious sense.

Four years ago in a private interview with the author, American poet Robert Frost put it still another way:

What you call spirituality, I guess, has always seemed to have a basis in country living. Look back through history and you'll see that the spiritual always seemed to have been connected with soil and sky . . . I'd like to see ev-

²¹ Conclusions of the International Catholic Congress on Problems of Rural Life, Rome, June-July 1951, pp. 7, 8.

everyone have hung around his neck a 20-acre piece of land somewhere, even if it was only a summer place. Not just as an obligation, but as a privilege. It would change all his thinking.

Nor does this apply only to the full-time farmer. As Mr. Frost suggests, daily proximity to seeds and seasons can have a most salutary effect even on the part-time ruralite. In changed measure, but still importantly, supporters of the Rural Mystique would maintain there is more indigenous reverence in the farm-focused village, in the small town, in any community in which visible creation is an active ingredient of a man's surroundings than there is in the crowded downtown block.

B. *Family*—The first fact here is undeniable. The farmer's best crop is his children. Over centuries the country has replaced itself, the city has not. The replenishment of our people today continues to come from areas rural or at least more nearly rural than the traditional urban. Statistics also indicate that family life is on the whole more stable in the normal rural community than in the normal urban area. Marriages last longer, as a matter of social observation, in the country than in the city. There is apt to be less psychological imbalance. Elders are treated with greater dignity. Far more frequently the rural family reacts to the world as a unit than does the urban family. There are many witnesses. Here is one: ²²

Beyond all other notice and regard, the agricultural order in the family unit pattern must be considered especially for the spiritual, social, and political vitality it has contributed to our civilization. A lessening of this vitality

²² Sub-Committee on Family Farms, 1956. Op. Cit., p. 3.

already is manifest in the shapes of an alarming growth in juvenile delinquency in urban areas, of crime, of the disappearance of many rural churches, of decaying little towns, of neglect of community loyalties and pride, and perhaps a lack in many places of the full satisfaction of a free trade in friendship and common purpose.

There can be no argument, even among the most all-out champions of the Rural Mystique, that things have changed, that the typical rural family in an age of agonized agriculture and sprawling cities no longer enjoys the stability of another earlier day. In fact one veteran Extension worker in middle Massachusetts told us on her retirement—"There's no such thing as a rural family here any more. They're all the same wherever they live." The change, however, does not defeat the mystique. For generations now commentators, priests, poets, and social philosophers have focused on what to them seemed the superior moral situation of the rural as against the urban family.

C. *National Strength*—The rural dweller with his little (or his big) piece of land has been estimated as an important bulwark and stabilizer of freedom. Like roots along a watercourse, rural firmness has been pictured as a strong defense against the floods of extremism. Both Pope Pius XI and Herschel Newsom (of the National Grange) have called our rural people "the backbone" of the nation. Franklin D. Roosevelt put it this way—²³

The American farmer, living on his own farm, remains our ideal of self-reliance and of

²³ in "The Church and the Land" a publication of The National Catholic Rural Life Conference.

spiritual balance—the source from which the reservoirs of the national strength are constantly renewed.

But it's not alone the farmer to whom the Rural Mystique looks in this significant category. The small community is likewise imaged forth as a vital force in the nation: ²⁴

America came to greatness from her 'grass-roots', and it is from life in small communities that strength must continue to flow and nourish our country toward greater accomplishment which can be shared by all. The hope of America is not that our huge cities shall become more vast—it is rather that the small communities shall consolidate their opportunities to grow and become better, more interesting places for our people to live in and prosper.

After the highly interesting Montana Study, his biography of which we earnestly recommend to each reader, Richard Poston re-affirms his belief that: ²⁵

It is the crossroads villages and small communities dotted across the broad countryside of these United States that have sustained the democratic heritage.

And again: ²⁶

No single factor is more important to the future of America and to the world at large than is the local community. From it come our ideals, our integrity, our moral strength, our leadership; and these qualities are no

²⁴ The Committee for Economic Development in Sub-Committee on Family Farms, 1956, Op. Cit., p. 3.

²⁵ Poston, Richard. *Small Town Renaissance*, Harpers and Brothers, 1953, p. 190.

²⁶ Poston, Richard. *Democracy Is You*, Harpers and Brothers, 1953, p. 9.

stronger in the American people than are the communities in which they live.

Arthur E. Morgan of Antioch College plays the same theme:²⁷

The face-to-face community is a fundamental and necessary unit of society . . . along with the family, it has been and continues to be the chief medium for transmitting the basic cultural inheritance.

H. Clay Tate of Middle Illinois relating the matter to religion, remarks:²⁸

No group in modern society has a bigger stake in the survival of the small community than the Christian church. Christianity is founded upon the principle of the sanctity of the individual. It believes that man, the individual, has a dignity and a purpose in life and that to attain that dignity he must live in harmony with the universe. To attain such harmony man must live and work and play in an environment which gives him dignity and purpose and fulfillment. Today's urbanized, centralized society does not provide that climate. The small community does.

Whatever the trend in contemporary living, this Rural Mystique exists. Whatever in fact its situation vis-à-vis the urban and the suburban reality, it remains the majority experience of mankind. Regional planning which ignores it is unbalanced planning. Planning education which fails to estimate its weight in civilization honestly is unbalanced education.

²⁷ Morgan, Arthur E. *Community of the Future*, Community Services, Yellow Springs, Ohio, 1957, p. 1.

²⁸ Tate, H. Clay. Op. Cit., p. 59.

II. *The Urban Mystique*

The city is in fact the most important thing instituted by human reason. For it is the object of all lesser communities. St. Thomas Aquinas

With a briefer background and somewhat less explicit statement, the Urban Mystique is not so formal as the Rural Mystique. Humankind's experience with big cities is relatively recent. At the start of the nineteenth century there were only twenty-one cities in the world with a population of 100,000. By 1850, 2% of the world's population lived in such cities. By 1950 the figure had climbed but only to 13%. For centuries urban living remained closely tied up with rural living. Most large communities were closely environed with fields. The purely urban experience is new in the chronicles of the race. Ebenezer Howard draws this picture: ²⁹

The town is the symbol of society—of mutual help and friendly cooperation, of fatherhood, motherhood, brotherhood, sisterhood, of wide relations between man and man—of broad, expanding sympathies—of science, art, culture, religion.

In the modern idiom, Louis Wirth defines a city as: ³⁰

(a) relatively large, densely concentrated aggregation of heterogeneous individuals living under conditions of anonymity, impersonal relations and indirect control.

Aristotle, centuries back, was specific: ³¹

Ten men are too few for a city; a hundred thousand too many. A man is not a man unless

²⁹ Howard, Ebenezer. *Op. Cit.*, p. 48.

³⁰ in *The Library in the Community*. Carnovsky and Martin, Chicago University Press, 1944.

³¹ *On Civics*.

he is a citizen. Men come together in cities in order to live; they remain together in order to live the 'good' life—a common life for noble ends. The polis population should be self-sufficient for living the good life as a realizable community, but not so large that a sense of conscious community is lost.

Once again in our own search we include but do not focus on the extreme. Just as, changing with the change, more is involved in contemporary ruralism than the isolated farm at the end of a dirt road, so more is involved in contemporary urbanism than the downtown ethnic slum.

The Urban Mystique is by and large less romantic, less premeditated than the Rural Mystique. It is by and large not so absolute though it can be equally blind. In fact as the nation grows in its judgment more "urban", it can become in a frenzy of self-justification downright fulsome.

If wholesomeness is the hallmark of the apologia for country life, excitement and social intercourse are the hallmarks of the case for urbanism. In the city, small before now large, men have met to do business, to protect themselves, to educate and progress. Even in those widely rural civilizations of medieval Europe, the teeming marketplace before Christmas, the sacramental temples, the cultural bazaars of the city must have seemed sometimes superior to the routine agrarianism of daily living.

Like their rural brothers, defenders of urbanism through history have tended to separate out certain areas of advantage:

A. Social Interaction and yet a More Mature Individualism—In the city the individual is freed from the

dead hand of tradition and family restriction. Intellectual and social loneliness tends to vanish in a multiple choice secondary group situation. Max Lerner remarks:³²

It (i.e. the city) lays stress on individual traits of personality, on uniqueness in dress and sophistication in taste, on awareness, on the dramatic impact that the individual makes in his brief meetings with others. It has replaced fear by anxiety, and the concern about danger from elemental forces with a vague concern about security, safety and the opinions of others.

If the country provides permanents and calls them roots, the urbanist will dissent and call many of them rather fences. If solitude is a rural virtue, the urbanist will juxtapose the virtue of contact.³³

The unique contribution of the city (is) a chance for rich, variegated, unexpected, easy, multidimensional human contacts in the flesh.

By a strange paradox, urban advantage includes the freedom to walk one's own way to a degree difficult in the small community, and yet simultaneously a wide choice of group ways, again to a degree difficult in the small community. A Catholic editor has put it rather well:³⁴

It must be admitted that the variety of merchandise available in the city shop is far more glamorous than the limited monotonous staples grown in one's own garden. It must be admitted that there is a fascination in spending one's

³² Clark, Dennis. *Op. Cit.*, p. 32.

³³ *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, *Op. Cit.*, p. 14.

³⁴ Willock, Edward in *Integrity*.

day among innumerable strangers which is not the same as seeing the same familiar faces every day in the week.

B. *Culture*—Masses of men are necessary to support organized art, to encourage genius, to sponsor theatre. Only in a circumstance accessible to urban crowds can museums thrive and great libraries and zoos and educational achievement. In the typical city men from many backgrounds gather. World foods and world ideas more and more congregate in the large American city. Lewis Mumford sees the urban environment as “a special framework directed toward the creation of differentiated opportunities for . . . a significant collective drama.”³⁵ In cities culture is progressive, living, creative. In rural areas, culture has always tended to be stagnant if not reactionary. Theodore Parker is blunt:³⁶

The union of men in large masses is indispensable to the development and rapid growth of their higher faculties. Cities have always been the fireplaces of civilization whence light and heat radiated out into the dark, cold world.

C. *Progress*—The city is always open to the new and the daring. If we had continued rural, we would have taken few forward steps. The multi-class city has been the melting pot of national maturity. Besides, the city provides a forum for public discussion, for all manner of liberating ideas, for face-to-face confrontation between intellectuals of many persuasions. The city is the natural habitat for that sort of revolution which even agrarian Thomas Jefferson conceded was necessary every so often for a democratic people. Without Boston,

³⁵ Mumford, Lewis. *The Culture of Cities*, Op. Cit., p. 481.

³⁶ Tryon, Edward (editor). *Useful Quotations*, Grosset and Dunlap, New York, 1933, p. 83.

where would the colonies have been back in '75? Without Paris, France might still be a Bourbon estate. Without St. Petersburg, the Tsars might be ruling in Russia today. Rural life is essentially conservative, urban life is essentially liberal. The city is tolerance, understanding, tomorrow not yesterday! But, equally as important as this ideological progress, the city spells material progress for millions of men. Urban growth has meant a rising standard of living, has freed man from the drudgery of sunrise-to-sundown work for bare subsistence return. Urban areas are traditionally more prosperous than the range of rural areas. The income of urban families almost always runs ahead of the average income of rural families.

Primarily, then, the Urban Mystique features freedom, striking off chains, interaction, "getting ahead." It stresses the social aspects of the human animal, variety, forwardness. It features man as more important in creation than "the gleaners" were or "the man with the hoe." If it weakens the primary group, it strengthens and proliferates the secondary group. It nourishes a multiple choice situation. It supports educational, financial, social advancement. One could go on at length, but this is the sum of the matter.

There is an interesting corollary to the Urban Mystique as it concerns the Catholic. In the United States, Catholics have been overwhelmingly urban, sometimes as high as 90%. In the beginning we huddled in the cities of the land for reasons at least one of which was religious. It was as Christopher Tunnard puts it: ³⁷

³⁷ Tunnard, Christopher. *The City of Man*. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1953, p. 13.

Men have also come together in cities in order to worship and in doing so have cemented the city more strongly. Religion has actually created cities.

As a matter of obvious fact, our Catholic ancestors in this country have been a major factor in the increasing urbanism of the nation. Economically, institutionally, emotionally, politically, Catholics congregated in America's urban centers. First the Irish, then the French and the Polish, the Italians and the South Germans—it was these predominantly Catholic people who bulked out our cities and built the vast majority of our churches. In case after case the First Church Catholic raised its spires in the heart of downtown. For generations Old St. Mary's and Old St. John's and others like them fed the faith of the great majority of Catholic America. Around these central urban temples rose the earliest Catholic schools. Around them orbited the social life of the Catholic population for long and often difficult decades. Vocations to the priesthood and to the sisterhood multiplied out of them. If they steeped a ghetto, at least it was a proud ghetto convinced of its own rightness in the sea of indifference and sometimes hostility which environed it. Even while the American people as a whole were still predominantly rural, the church remained top-heavy urban.

If a change has come in the American community in our time, one clear danger for Catholic social action is that it may have trouble forgetting the past, trouble being objective. In the struggle between mystiques we have been strongly, if accidentally, partisan. There is need today for independence of judgment as the church assesses its role in a changing community.

But, before we move further into church specifics, suppose we complete our disjunction. There is yet another mystique abroad in the land today. We could call it the suburban mystique or the relatively low density mystique or the rose-covered-ranch house mystique or the FHA mystique or the station wagon mystique. Suppose we settle for just the Middle Mystique.

III. *The Middle Mystique*

Ebenezer Howard called for the "marriage" of town and country. Only by a proper blending, he proclaimed, was it possible to secure order and hope in society. In our time such a "marriage" is in fact taking place. Nine times out of ten, however, it is not premeditated on both sides, the courtship is too short or the whole process more resembles a shotgun wedding than a social sacrament. Out of such a union, for better or for worse and in a manner quite otherwise than Howard would have projected, has emerged the Middle Mystique. It stands today, like St. Sebastian, pierced by many arrows in many places. Sarcasm, accusation, cocktail humor, predictions that would put Cassandra to shame—with these the shafts are barbed.

One difficulty, we are told, with phrasing the context of this Middle Mystique is its sheer amorphousness. And actually suburbs are cast in many molds. Suburb differs from suburb, but equally city differs from city and small town from small town. It's true some suburbs are nearly indistinguishable from core city, but there are also areas in some cities which are nearly indistinguishable from the suburbs which border them. There are big suburbs and little suburbs, bedroom suburbs and one industry suburbs, near suburbs and far out suburbs. In any case, though boundaries blur at

the edges, there is enough central reality in suburbia to separate out something distinct from the mass around it. The fact that "country" exists in one part of that mass and "town" in the other is no proof at all that the suburb itself is a fiction. Except in the walled cities of antiquity, boundaries between pure rural and pure urban have never been mathematically definitive.

Unlike Solomon's baby, a third course is clearly given when it comes to dividing up the American community. Somewhere far or near around most of our cities there is a belt of relatively low density, single family housing, distinguished by children, active PTA's, do-it-yourself tulips and commuting. This is a fact of so nearly universal experience we need debate its existence no further.

We are told, also, that the suburb is actually just another phase of urbanism. One expert says:³⁸

The suburbanite is seeking no bucolic retreat from the technological revolution of the Twentieth Century. Instead he is searching for a 'cleaner, less congested community in which he can live an urban way of life'.

Both Father Greeley³⁹ and Dennis Clark⁴⁰ seem to opt for this position. According to it, when a family leaves the core city for suburbia it does so trailing clouds of reverent urbanism. When a family abandons downtown it does not therefore, we are asked to believe, become something other than urban. There is not a real but only a locational distinction between its former habitat and its new one. Academically, of course, this point of view

³⁸ Mower, Ernest R. in *The Suburban Community*, William Dobriner (editor), Putnam's New York, 1958. p. 161.

³⁹ Greeley, Rev. Andrew. *The Church and the Suburbs*, Sheed and Ward, New York, 1959, cf. pp. 13, 15.

⁴⁰ Clark, Dennis. *Op. Cit.*, cf. p. 13.

is entitled to its theses. If we disagree with them, academically, we do so with equal right. In point of fact, we question both the conclusion itself and the premises. If it be claimed that suburbia is by no stretch of the most favorable imagination reminiscent of rural Kansas, it is just as true that suburbia is emphatically not Brooklyn or the South Side of Chicago. Terminology limps here, of course, as it does elsewhere. We still feel that suburbia for all its frayed edges is an entity unto itself and should be so treated. We concede that here as in many court cases technical experts could be called for both sides of the argument. Here, at least, are two speaking for our position:⁴¹

The net results of the Chicago case study strongly indicate the advisability of distinguishing between the rural-urban fringe population and other components of the urban and rural populations.

And a sociologist:⁴² "There are no grounds for doubting that suburbanism is a 'way of life' as well as an ecological phenomenon." At the academic level already the argument over suburbia's identity is highly significant. When we pass over into the realm of practical planning, it becomes even more significant. How shall this new mass of population be approached? Are these in fact urban colonies which should be brimful of loyalty toward a core city which their inhabitants have deliberately chosen to abandon? Ought the future of our metropolitan areas be decided in terms only of what is good for core city as if suburbia in fact is entitled to no more than a correlative consideration? Granted

⁴¹ Duncan and Reiss. *Op. Cit.*, p. 149.

⁴² Fava, Sylvia Fleis in *American Sociological Review*, February 1956, p. 35.

a mutuality of interests in certain spheres as between Down Town and Suburbia shall the harmonization of those interests occur in a meeting of peers or in a woodshed session in which the suburbanite plays only the role of the sinning son?

In either case, as parasite or as third force, there is clearly need for a longer look at this bulge in which the Middle Mystique resides. The burgeoning out of suburbia, for instance, is obvious evidence that people are leaving Down Town. More than this, it is evidence of another highly important situation. If cities once fed by rural generations are now stagnant, suburbia becomes equal evidence that many of those who once left the farms and the small, rural villages for the bright urban lights are today, by and large, halting halfway—in suburbia! It would in our judgment be difficult to sustain the conclusion that these people moving out and moving in do so trailing clouds of prior preference. In another age, it would be fantasy to suppose that families which deserted the land carried with them to the city a lasting phalanx of ruralism. True, there often survived a certain nostalgia, a certain confusion, a certain feeling for faraway fields. But soon enough the farm was forgotten, pockets of hill-billyism were absorbed, and the next generation was urban. Likewise a longer look in terms of the Middle Mystique would seem to suggest that when a downtown family moves to suburbia, it is deliberately seeking something different. Even if it looks back occasionally, a choice has been made. The new suburbanite, in our judgment, plants no flags for the land he has left behind him. His children will shortly mature in a situation as unused to tenements as it is to barns. The short view and the bitter books may speak otherwise but for our money, this

Middle Mystique in fact occupies an individuality. It is not paradise, it is not purgatory. In many, many instances it is not firm but fluid, flexible. Still by the positive choice of more and more millions of us it is the dominant way of life of the American people. Himself hardly an apologist for suburbia, David Riesman is forced to confess: ⁴³

The whole American ethos, which once revolved about the dialectic of pure country versus wicked city, seems to me now aerated by the suburban outlook. This produces an homogenization of both city and country, but without full integration.

Pennsylvania's eminent Dr. William L. C. Wheaton is even more specific: ⁴⁴

The suburban areas must take the full impact of our huge population growth. They now have a population of approximately 50 million. During the next 20 to 25 years they will probably absorb an additional 100 million, making them three times larger . . . The suburb has become the dominant characteristic of our civilization and presumably the goal of most of our population . . . It has become a way of life which best expresses our materialistic ideals, our frontier love of open space, and our new concern with leisure and the good life.

An important side-light to this psychology of the Middle Mystique is the theory of urban return. We are told a counter-trend is developing back to downtown. Most probably when the center of our cities is widely renewed

⁴³ *Annals*, Op. Cit., 1957, p. 139.

⁴⁴ "Housing Yearbook" of The National Housing Conference, Connecticut Avenue, Washington, D.C., 1959, p. 3.

some such trend will be occasionally evident. It has not so far shown up! Wheaton is almost bitter: ⁴⁵

This so-called return to the city is more illusory than real . . . This myth (i.e. of urban residential resurgence) is being perpetrated by an avant-garde of dry martini eggheads and by wishful thinkers.

First reports from the 1960 Census amply confirm the Wheaton judgment. "There is no sign of a once-predicted return to the cities." ⁴⁶

To sum up, responsible opinion plus overwhelming statistics combine to indicate that the ranch-house-with-roses is replacing the frontier cabin, the family farm house and the inner city flat as the majority locale and symbol of the American future. The Middle Mystique, therefore, assumes a peculiar significance. If, speaking of it further, we stress its positive aspects, we do not deny its negative aspects. Simply, as before with rural and urban, we are concerned with the dream itself, not so much with the debits. This, in any case, is its supposed framework of advantage.

A. *Children*—The most powerful magnet in suburbia, from Levittown to Buck's County, is the as yet unbroken conviction that it offers more room, better schools, air, space and light in which to bring up a family. Suburbs have been described as "a cause as well as an effect of the baby boom." ⁴⁷ "Time" recently ran the picture of a suburban wife on its cover, and while it did not refer to her as lady of the year, it might very well have done so in terms of its feature on suburbia inside. A survey in Park Ridge and Des

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 4.

⁴⁶ *United States News and World Report*, 13 June 1960, p. 67.

⁴⁷ *Fortune*. October 1956, p. 128.

Planes outside Chicago showed 81% of the interviewees had moved because they felt suburbia was "better for children." 77% included as part of their motivation the belief that they could "enjoy life more" in the suburbs: ⁴⁸

The respondents reported moving because of the children; but they also reported that since they had lived in the suburbs, they had learned to enjoy suburban living so much that they would never move back to the city.

An earlier survey, in the Eugene-Springfield area of Oregon, had shown similar motivation. 21.4%, on a total percentage base of 100%, said they had come to suburbia to find less congestion and more room; 17.4% said they had come because they felt it was better for children. ⁴⁹

Any such mass movement, rightly or wrongly inspired to a large degree by child welfare, must spawn a strong mystique. Tears will continue to be shed, of course, over the passing of those other factors so important in the childhood of so many in the nation's past—the family farm and the united nations tenement (and neighborhood). But tears and academic preference will not alter the fact. Only when the Middle Mystique is proven false to this fundamental aspect of human hope—better things for our children—can its strength be reduced. A child-centered community presumably expends more of its time, talent and resources on child-centered activity. Suburbia must continue to attract so long as it seems to outdistance core city and rural hamlet in this regard. But the cycle doesn't stop here. As families move further and further out, as the suburban lot becomes more and more of a beacon to most

⁴⁸ in Dobriner. *The Suburban Community*, Op. Cit., p. 239.

⁴⁹ Martin, Walter. Op. Cit., p. 37.

every newly married couple, industry, retail trade and power in all its dimensions necessarily follow. And so in a very real if bizarre sense, it is the babies and the cradles of the nation which are mainly responsible for the plight of downtown. It is the mothers of America by and large who march at the head of the suburban armies!

B. *Status*—Inevitably the cottage of our Anglo-Saxon forebears figures in the Middle Mystique. Private property and private space are prominent throughout our national dream. Aided and abetted by a scarcely reticent real estate trade, most Americans have come to want nothing more desperately than homes of their own. The church cannot quarrel with this general objective. The freedom and room which a single family dwelling implies are, surely, social desirables. And social desirables do lap over into moral desirables. In suburbia, America seeks prestige, seeks bird of a feather, seeks a polite address.⁵⁰

The argument from status runs monotonously similar in community after community. If all your friends live out why should you stay in? Like babies, status is both cause and effect of suburbia. "Snobbery and imitation of the rich plays a declining part in this (i.e. suburban) exodus."⁵¹ True, status is now in an "affluent society" within the reach of millions. Yet the same pervasive feeling that suburbia is the place to be—that when you can afford it the smart thing to do is to migrate to Happy Acres—this remains compelling.

⁵⁰ We are personally familiar with a woman who lived in one part of a town-becoming-a-suburb and yet refused to have her mail delivered from the branch post-office in her section of the community. Reason—her part of town was relatively stagnant, had factories, etc. The main part of the community remained a highly respectable location.

⁵¹ Riesman, David in Dobriner, *Op. Cit.*, p. 389.

Central Illinois is hardly metropolitan Washington or New York, but suburbia may well be somewhat susceptible to what H. Clay Tate wrote of the "heartland" of America: ⁵²

It is a good life here in Central Illinois. It is rich and wholesome and challenging. It offers opportunity and it rewards effort. There are such communities all over this great nation, far from the stale city which saps so much of the people's energy . . . Go home, young man, and build a better community.

What happens, ultimately, when the suburbs fill up and the shining towers rise in downtown urban renewal it is not easy to estimate. An intown address in a bright, modern apartment surrounded by fountains, fashion and smart shops will unquestionably prove attractive. Where the rub may well come is in conflict between "what's best for the kids" and which address looks better on a social RSVP!

C. *Control*—Much is being written about small-townism in suburbia. It has been praised. In many editorials and before many classes it has been mocked and scoffed at. The pursuit of localism, we have even been warned, is a danger to our national purpose. ⁵³ Greece, the argument runs, remained weak as a whole because its parts, the city states, were too strong, were too separate. On the other hand, the contention is that centralism with its emasculation of checks and balances poses at least an equal danger to the national character. The fact is, still, people do come to suburbia hoping and expecting to find something more manageable. It

⁵² Tate, H. Clay. *Op. Cit.*, p. 226.

⁵³ Wood, Robert. *Suburbia, Its People and Their Politics*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1959, p. 261.

does little practical good to weigh this quest in terms of an ideal gamut of choice as between the ideal city and the ideal small town. Only certain limited alternatives are available to the American today. Choosing within this availability, the average suburbanite feels that he has available to him more width of control than he had in the city he has just abandoned or, as the case may be, more variety of services and more educated "government" than in the rural hamlet he has just deserted. It is entirely true to remark that he may and does sometimes neglect the chance he supposedly seeks. "The suburbanite running for his train has little time to devote to civic activities in his new habitat."⁵⁴ The point is that chance is there, in greater or lesser measure; most suburbanites are convinced that if and when they do wish to take a hand in "town affairs" they can do so with considerable more ease of action than exists in the downtown forum. Some of this control may be exercised via subdivision lobbies. It may take years before Mr. Suburban (and Mrs. Suburban) really pitches into genuine civic action. Once he does, he may very well find that "politics", cliques and "intrigue" exist just as really in the suburb as in the city. But it's all on a smaller scale, more amenable to personal effort, less red tape and bureaucracy and more face-to-face maneuvering. Besides, the facts of political life in many of our cities, partisan and non-partisan, are clearly one party facts. In suburbia, often, it's also a one party hegemony—but another party is involved, and this in itself can be a major attraction.

Robert Wood, and others, have salted the wounds in suburban localism. And in the context of an ideal political science it is entirely proper that this be done.

⁵⁴ Aronovici, *Op. Cit.*, p. 231.

Certainly no one in his right mind will contend that suburbia USA has evolved a magic perfection when it comes to "small" government. The net result of this salting operation, however, is unreal. The contemporary American city is far from perfect. Suburbia must be judged as is, so must downtown and the small rural community. It is clearly begging the question to suspect millions of Americans of illusion and delusion when, looking at today's choices, they pronounce the suburb less imperfect! Or, as Harlan Douglas puts it—"The suburbs, in spite of their limitations, are the most promising aspect of urban civilization."⁵⁵

D. *Land*—There is a difference of opinion on the suburban garden. David Riesman sees it as:⁵⁶

simply one more chore . . . not a contrast with the asphalt jungle of the city or a pleasure in growing things . . . but a tax imposed by neighborhood consciousness.

Walter Martin sees it otherwise:⁵⁷

For men and for women a large plot of land is significantly related to satisfactory adjustment to fringe residence. For men and for women, the presence of a family garden is significantly associated with favorable attitudes toward the fringe . . . (The) stated intention to have as large or a larger garden next year is significantly associated.

However its formal manicuring may in fact affect him, the suburbanite does enjoy his land. A lower than urban density is a major ingredient in this Middle Mystique. Even with its own ravenous land hunger suburbia of-

⁵⁵ in Dobriner, *Op. Cit.*, p. 91.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 391.

⁵⁷ Martin, Walter, *Op. Cit.*, p. 77.

fers more fields, more trees, more lakes. The barbecue pit, the Little League Field, the residual cows, the closer mountains, the nearby wood walks—all these are part of land. More and more Americans are learning that they can't depend on their neighbors. Elbow room is a matter of private ownership or close public control of every acre. If low density living is important, and the overwhelming record of America since World War II indicates that it is, then the pluses remain with suburbia. Despite horrible attrition and continuing carelessness, land continues to be magnet and hope in the suburb. Downtown it has long since vanished.

Twenty years back, Harry Elmer Barnes suspected that the ideal life for America would have to be found somewhere between the isolated farm and the crowded city. Since then, the bulge in the middle between cornfields and tenements has become so big it dominates the civic scene. Is it ideal, subterfuge, compromise, excuse—this Middle Mystique? One thing at least is sure. It is too important to be left to cocktail jokes, bitter books and ecological confusion!

IV. *The Metro Mystique*

Until quite recently, we could have ended our disjunction here. We still can if we but assess individual communities. There is, however, a fourth mystique—one which towers over each of the others. This mystique, which we call the Metropolitan Mystique, is relatively new for the American local community. It is relatively old in the history of the American people. The symbol of our revolution from Britain was a snake divided and the motto—United We Stand, Divided We Fall. The symbol of the Metropolitan Mystique is the same snake, only now the parts are labelled,—suburb,

core, town. The motto is the same only now the enemy is not redcoats but inefficiency and administrative chaos. And Committees of Correspondence comprising some of our leading statesmen and intellectuals already exist to promote the change!

Louder and louder the gospel of this Metropolitan Mystique echoes across the land. As the fact of metropolitan sprawl penetrates through the politicians and planners to the average American there is an increasing awareness of common problems and the possible need for new common solutions to them. Mostly so far it's talk, statistics, editorials and conferences! There are two shining achievements. One is Toronto which, after considerable difficulty, has federated with its suburbs and is now involved in "planned growth"; the other is Dade County, Florida, which has brought city and county together in a purportedly thriving "Metro." If the number of successes thus runs far shorter than the number of unsuccessful attempts (e.g. in Nashville, Tennessee, and in St. Louis, Missouri), if the fight to date has notably failed to catch the enthusiasm of the nation, still this Metropolitan Mystique is important today and bids fair to take added importance tomorrow. Each passing year, the metropolitan evangel reads, the absurdity of present political boundaries in many of the metropolitan sectors of the country becomes more apparent. Jurisdictions overlap, regional difficulties cannot be regionally approached. The fact is, frankly, that as we continue to spread out, as the sceptre more and more passes to suburbia, both for political science reasons (in the one instance) and for practical reasons (in the other) politicians and planners are more than ever enthralled by the concept of *union*. Suburbs and core cities of America unite, the great call goes forth, you

have nothing to lose but your anachronisms! There are many ingredients to the Metropolitan Mystique. Suppose we separate out three.

A. *Democracy*—In a common crisis all should act and all should be heard. Metropolitan areas constitute a common crisis for each of their components—core city, suburb, rural sector. Decisions should be taken by mutual agreement and only after frank discussion with recognition for individual community rights and responsibilities. What seems to be happening instead is that development in many of our metropolitan areas is either unplanned or private, most often a combination of both. The profit motive, by and large, with little notion of common good is shaping the metropolitan tomorrow of the American nation. One community pushes ahead at the expense of its neighbor. Another community drags its feet at the expense of a total metropolitan advantage. Private interests operate almost at will in much of the land area. There is plenty of talk and many wisdoms but little actual cooperation. Metropolitan organization of some sort would formalize a democratic approach to vital mutual problems of communities caught willy nilly in a metropolitan context.

B. *Unity*—In the New York—New Jersey—Connecticut Standard Metropolitan Area (i.e. New York City and its environs) there are upwards of 15,000,000 people living on some 5,000 square land miles. Administering the civic situation of these millions are sixteen counties (plus the five in New York City itself), 600 municipalities and a number of major cities. Luther Gulick has compared such metropolitan areas to a huge statue of Buddha with a thousand arms. Only unlike Buddha there is here no common brain, no common backbone. The need for unity, in short, is imperative.

Whatever suburbia in fact represents, its problems are inextricably associated with those of downtown. Downtown, in turn, finds its future closely tied up with the suburbs. All this, of course, is not a revolutionary discovery. Says the mayor of the nation's largest city:⁵⁸

Some of the proponents of metropolitan area 'solution' talk as though they were leading us to a new promised land. Basically, there is nothing completely new about the problems we now call 'metropolitan.' They are, however, hitting us faster and harder than they ever have before.

The pace has quickened, the numbers multiply. As a matter of mutual advantage the reasons are today more compelling than ever before.

It's perhaps entirely true to hold that suburb and core city can go on muddling through for many decades, that the need for unity is nowhere near so drastic as to force combination. Nevertheless, the Metropolitan Mystique contends, the most elemental principles of civic common sense suggest closer connection between contiguous jurisdictions in a booming metropolitan area than simply a casual seminar now and then or a loose agreement to consult each other when (and if) the spirit moves.

C. *Order*—In 1957, City Planner John T. Howard announced—"The United States has become a metropolitan nation."⁵⁹ If the fact was evident then, it is even more so today. An orderly metropolitan development, then, is a matter of most serious moment to all Americans. And order at this scale would seem to include such items as individuated communities, green

⁵⁸ Wagner, Robert. to Conference of Mayors, Los Angeles, July, 1959.

⁵⁹ Annals, Op. Cit., p. 32.

belts, balanced residential, agricultural, commercial and industrial growth! Some of these can be accomplished haphazard. Take fifty green squares, fifty red squares and fifty yellow squares and throw them up in the air. There is a chance—just a chance—that they will fall to the ground in perfect mosaic. But that chance is infinitesimally small, and it becomes even smaller if each of the squares is somehow endowed with the power of self-motion. Just so, the possibility of achieving the type of order we must have without metropolitan combination of some sort is exceedingly small. Order implies the doing of certain things by certain communities within the metropolitan complex, the not doing of certain things by other communities. Order, and this is the real rub, presumes that some overall agency will create and sustain a pattern (as for instance a green belt of open and/or agricultural land around our major core cities) in which each community will operate.

The hour is already late, the metropolitanists warn. Strong forces are moving in and through most of our metropolitan areas at this very moment. Disorder, already rampant, spreads further every minute of every day. There are many faces to the monster. Here are but a few. Seen from the point of view of the transportation expert, what it adds up to is something like this: ⁶⁰

In American communities most of the housing and commercial developments now taking place make little sense . . . At one extreme, we are preserving the old congested ways of urban living as if the technological innovations in transportation and communications—and the threat of modern warfare—did not exist. At the other extreme, we are reacting against high

⁶⁰ Owen, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 265, 266.

densities, by substituting endless sprawl, with no effort to control growth, preserve open spaces, or apply our new-found mobility to the enhancement of urban life.

An expert in land economics comments: ⁶¹

The disintegration of our cities could be described conservatively as a national calamity of some proportions, whose mischievous consequences only wait to be recognized.

William Whyte Jr., long-time student of civic confusion, notes: ⁶²

When we look at the way the countryside is being desecrated, we know deep in our hearts that anything that looks so bad can't be good economics; we know that something wrong and unnecessary is going on, that it is not progress and that it is not inevitable.

These, then, are the basic mystiques, the moods and the mode within which the changing American community presently operates. We have drawn a positive picture, but in fact there is a dissent to each of them. Subsequently, we shall have occasion to spotlight some of this dissent. For our present purpose it seems sufficient to say again that professionally, politically, and in the popular mind there is today a tragic lack of unity as to the right meaning of each mystique in our civilization and as to the validity of the dissent from it. What seems to be occurring is that decisions are being taken and the pattern of America's tomorrow is being put together with very little concern for fundamentals. In large sectors of the Planning profession there seems to be a remoteness from any real apprecia-

⁶¹ Gaffney, M. Mason in *Land*, Op. Cit., p. 522.

⁶² to the American Society of Planning Officials, 1958.

tion of the role of rural life in history. In large sectors of community planning, private profit seems to be conceded an equal position in determining land use with the common good of the community itself and the general goal of the region in terms of optimum overall land futures. Some citizen planners, even, are shocked when the suggestion is made that each important decision they take should in fact be referred to a final criterion—will this advance or detract from the type of community you want here in this spot fifty years from now?

Nevertheless, the major Mystiques are there for all to see. Suppose, abstaining now from further comment, we sum up our conclusions relative to them:

POINT ONE—After sharing through most of our existence the majority world experience, i.e. as a rural people, we became an urban people largely through the influx of non-Anglo Saxon races and through industrialization.

POINT TWO—The preliminary growth of American urbanism was followed by a notable in-drawing of the nation to its urban centers.

POINT THREE—This centripetalism has been succeeded by an out-going of our cities and at the same time, though not so clearly recognized, by a halting of much rural-to-urban migration in suburbia.

POINT FOUR—Today urban leaders, rural conservationists and planners alike are worried lest failure to organize expanding metropolitan areas on an overall basis will lead to confusion, loss of vital values and increasingly painful frictions.

POINT FIVE—Suburbia remains the major reality in the American community today. What it is must be decided before we try to decide what to do with and in it. A good case can be made for the treatment of suburbia as a third force in the nation.

PLANNING IS A VITAL VOCATION

At about the time the Christopher movement was being launched in 1945, I had a stimulating conversation with an editorial writer of a national magazine . . . I said to him: 'If you and a hundred other editors and writers make it your business to carry that idea (i.e. the fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man) into the mainstream of modern life, you might do much to change the dangerous trend of our times.' He immediately came back with the pointed retort: 'Listen, a hundred or even a thousand editors like me couldn't even begin to do what you Catholics could accomplish if you would ever wake up and realize that you should take as much interest in others as you do in yourselves.'¹

So far we have focused on the field, on the terms of correlation as between church and change. We turn now to the profession. If we by-pass details en route, it's because we practise still Action Theory and not ideological gymnastics. If we concentrate on Planning, and we shall use the capital throughout this chapter to indicate a professional operation rather than a general process, we mean in no sense to slight or diminish other disciplines like political science and social science. Each of many disciplines in fact plays its role in the changing community. Planning, however, proposes to correlate them in a specific solution to a specific civic problem in a specific time period. Theoretically the City and Regional Planner is a sort of *primus inter pares*. He assumes a total task, then sub-contracts various aspects of that task to the other disciplines. Even if when it

¹ Keller M.M., Rev. James. *The Why and Wherefore of the Christophers*, New York, 1957, p. 5.

comes to brass and buttons the Planner stands far down the scale of actual power, still he remains in the scope and character of his calling an extraordinarily vital force in society. No matter how physical his training may have been, no matter how restricted in the event his freedom of choice becomes, the Planner proposes to re-make the socio-civic world in big or little portions. Who he is, how he arrives at his profession, his relationship with those who sentinel the mores of the race—this is highly significant to the church in its social action apostolate.

The first question, obviously, involves definition. What is Planning? Funk and Wagnalls dictionary defines a plan as "a methodological arrangement of the various steps believed necessary or conducive to the attainment of some object." One expert puts his definition chronologically: ²

The practise of city planning today involves a multiplicity of specialists. A half century or so ago city planning was largely an aesthetic concept of the architect—the City Beautiful; later on it was an engineering concept—street and subdivision layout, transportation. More recently economic concepts have come to the fore—land use, labor force, productivity. Today the concept of city planning involves all of these and, in addition, an insight into the way people relate themselves to one another, their aims and aspirations, their educational, housing and recreational needs, their demands for individual self-respect as well as for mass security; the reciprocal effects of environment on family and neighborhood life. City plan-

² Burdell, Edwin in "The Role of the Sociologist in City Planning", A Georgia Institute of Technology brochure, 1956.

ning, particularly as it has tried to cope with the overwhelming problems of our large cities and metropolitan areas, has become an intricate process involving careful organization and team work, utilizing the skills and talents of persons with varied backgrounds. The larger, the more difficult the problem to be dealt with, the more important have become the survey and evaluation phases of the planning process . . . Planning in a democratic society includes as much the organization of the community and the body politic, the means of mass communications, and the legislative and administrative processes, as it does the specific physical solutions . . . A knowledge of the social process and social institutions is essential if the blueprints of urban and rural communities are to be designed for human beings and not the human beings to be fitted into the blueprints.

Other definitions of City Planning include the following: "unified development," "intelligent forethought applied to the development of the community," "a means for systematically anticipating and achieving adjustment in the physical environment of a city consistent with social and economic trends and sound principles of civic design," "the gearing of various activities to form a unified function," "the process by which we determine objectives, define our immediate needs and design a course of action with a corresponding scheduling of effort," "an attempt not arbitrarily to displace reality but to clarify it and to grasp firmly all the elements necessary to bring the geographic and

economic facts in harmony with human purpose." Seeking to accommodate Planning and Democracy, another expert writes:³

The justification of planning, in terms of freedom, must be that by conscious collective decision of economic priorities our frustrations are diminished and our freedoms enlarged . . . that we have more opportunity to do what we want to do. This in turn implies (1) that objectives exist which can properly be described as 'for the good of all', (2) that these objectives can be ascertained with reasonable accuracy and (3) that the men and women on whom lies the duty of making decisions 'for the benefit of all and on behalf of all' will in fact continuously pursue these objectives.

City and Regional Planning, in short, is an attempt to relate means to ends in a framework of civic reference and with more or less highly developed technical skills. For our purposes, this brief excursion must suffice.

Beyond definition these points emerge.

POINT ONE—*The context in which the planning function operates includes significant areas of social concern and moral question.*

Time and again in this study we rehearse church opinion in the area of socio-civic action. If we recapitulate here somewhat, it is only to spotlight more strongly the connection between the apostolic obligation of the church in contemporary society and the subject matter of Planning. Here is some of the sense of that connection as we see it:

³Wooten, Barbara. *Freedom Under Planning*, University of North Carolina Press, 1945, p. 20.

i. There is a moral basis to many problems in the changing community.

Common sense and truth as well are contradicted by whoever asserts that these (social and similar problems) are outside the field of morals and hence are, or at least can be, beyond the influences of that authority established by God to see to a just order and to direct the consciences and actions of men along the path to their true and final destiny.⁴

Problems such as that of the economy and social reform . . . are necessarily and continually bound up with the personal value of men, their moral strength and their sincere determination to meet responsibilities and to understand and then deal ably with matters that they undertake or are bound to undertake.⁵

The 'problems of society' then cannot be faced as though they were difficulties which could be resolved solely through technical means. To a great degree they are problems of interpersonal relationships and their solution could be aided immeasurably if we were continually conscious of the worth of each individual as a child of God. This presents to us the task of creating communities in which the desires and purposes of the individual must be achieved in harmony with similar legitimate desires of other individuals.⁶

⁴ Pope Pius XII *To Cardinals, Archbishops and Bishops of Italy*, 2 November 1954.

⁵ Pope Pius XII. *To a National (Italian) Convention of the Christian Union of Executives and Businessmen*, 7 March 1957.

⁶ Richard Cardinal Cushing. *The Christian and the Community*, a pastoral letter, Boston, 1960.

The social question and the controversies underlying that question . . . are not merely of an economic nature and consequently such as can be settled while the Church's authority is ignored since on the contrary it is most certain that it is primarily a moral and religious one, and on that account must be settled chiefly in accordance with the moral law and judgment based on religion.⁷

ii. Individually and collectively socio-civic change involves the church.

A crisis of citizenship . . . is . . . a crisis of men . . . A great many among those individuals who call themselves Christians share the blame for the present day confusion of society . . . (There is) a lack of interest in public affairs . . . (There may happen) a fiscal fraud which effects the moral life, the social equilibrium and the economy of a country . . . (There sometimes arises) a sterile criticism of authority and self-centered defense of privileges in contempt of the general interest . . . (There is at times) an individual lack of civic consciousness . . . Formation of powerful and active pressure groups is perhaps the most serious aspect of the crisis . . . (Always remember) the moral roots of a civic crisis . . . Do not let reflection on institutions and quest for remedies on the level of political structures ever hide from your sight the moral roots.⁸

iii. Like the Planner the church is interested in more than generalities and platitudes. Specific social

⁷ Pope Pius X. *Singulari Quadam*, 24 September 1912.

⁸ Pope Pius XII. *To the Semaines Sociales de France*, 14 July 1954.

action is clearly contemplated if not always determined in frequent church pronouncements.

Truly it is of little avail to discuss questions with nice subtlety, or to discourse eloquently of rights and duties, when all is unconnected with practise. The times we live in demand action.⁹

You will draw up an objective balance sheet of our 'urban civilization' today with its gigantic concentrations and its continual expansions; with its wasteful surplus of inhuman production, with its unjust returns, with its exhausting moments of leisure. Then by an effort at synthesis, starting with present day errors, but especially with modern hopes and promises, you will trace a vast plan of urban civilization and humanism, conceived as the function of the capacities and needs of man. The whole sum of your accumulated labors ought to be employed in the making of this huge synthesis of the world of tomorrow. Do not show any timidity. Defend, demand, impose, in the name of a science in which no one can equal you, your masterful and liberating conception of the world and of man.¹⁰

Define it as you will, City and Regional Planning represents a peculiarly strategic, if at times indirect, combination of many of these areas and concerns. We concede fully the existence of certain quantities of technical neutrality in Planning. The same is true of Architecture and Engineering. Still, more tangibly than with either

⁹ Pope Pius X. *E Supreme Apostolatus*, 4 October 1903.

¹⁰ Emmanuel Cardinal Suhard. *Essor ou Declin de L'Eglise*, a pastoral letter, Paris, 1947.

of these, moral responsibility and social consequence are often closer to the surface in any significant Planning venture.

As to the subject matter of Planning in which moral question resides, we need spell out but a few instances to indicate our thought. i) Fundamentally Planning calls for an adjustment between many private goods and the common good on a large or on a small scale. ii) Urban Renewal, launched and annually sustained as part of "the national housing program", seems to tend at times toward a stronger fiscal and economic rather than human emphasis. iii) Massive residential development in a small town can create serious community problems. How much such development must the town take in terms of the greater good of the area as a whole, how much may it refuse to take on the grounds that most houses do not begin to pay their way as to community costs? iv) If combination on a metropolitan scale is in fact desirable, what are the demands of commutative justice on the metropolitan organizers and how far ought local options to be respected?

Suffice this to indicate that there exists a certain conjunction of concern between the church and the Planner. That conjunction is presently amorphous but none the less real. It suggests an important common ground and it establishes here at the very outset of our consideration that Planning is a vocation vital to the church.

POINT TWO—There are several phases in the planning process in which the church might logically involve itself, at least in what appear to be numerous circumstances.

What is referred to within the profession as "the planning process" or as "the planning function" is a

complex operation. There is no pat formula for defining it. These steps, however, are usually involved—goal formulation, fact-finding, plan-making and implementation. The order, the semantics and the width of definition change. The overall pattern remains. Through all of the steps runs decision in big and little shapes, decision from within Planning and decision from outside Planning. Somewhere between fact-finding and plan-making alternatives are proposed. There are controls, again from inside and out, controls which limit and tend to direct the process. Much more could be added here and were we academicians we should want to make such addition. For our purposes, this four part disjunction seems adequate. Suppose we stop for a moment and relate the church to each of these four steps.

i. *Goal Formulation.* At the ultimate level, goal formulation in any society is a church concern. At the intermediate level, likewise, if this final concern is to be effective, goal formulation will involve the church. Throughout the entire planning process, there is place for reiteration of goals. Nor is it an inconsiderable service for the church in a situation where only short-range goals are being pushed to speak out now and then for more ultimate purpose, to check the specifics against the generals. Two Planning professionals put the matter this way: ¹¹

Since reference back to very general goals is a painful one intellectually, most actions must be guided by intermediate, more concrete, objectives, which can be referred to more quickly . . . But these intermediate goals should be periodically checked for their relevance to

¹¹ Lynch, Kevin, and Rodwin, Lloyd. "A Theory of Urban Form" in *Journal of the American Institute of Planners*, Vol. 24, 1958, No. 4, p. 208.

more general objectives and to the changing situation, as well as for consistency among themselves.

We defer from this judgment only to suggest very strongly that someone, somebody needs to compare what is being done and/or proposed at the various stages of Planning with what in fact has been the ultimate goal proposed at the outset for that Planning. Once the concrete is poured into the mould, it's a little late to discover that in fact the mould is otherwise than what one wishes it to be. In any case, the role of the church at the goal stage of the planning process would seem fairly evident.

ii. *Fact-Finding*. When it comes to survey and data collection, the church is relatively a spectator in the planning process. Surely, there will be occasions when its census information and personal knowledge will assist the Planner in his effort to size up his subject. It is even likely that at times the church will be well advised to maintain close contact with the fact-finding operation. If it's a truism in apologetics that the Devil can quote Scripture to suit his purposes, it's just as true that faulty (or biased) assembly of "the facts" can generate faulty (or biased) decisions. As to standards, for instance how much park space a thousand urban families require, the church most often will accept the Planners figures with as much trust as it accepts the architect's suggestions as to what size pipe the new parish hall requires. But again, with malice toward none, there remains need in many situations for church caution and review of the data collection phase of the Planner's operation.

iii. *Plan-Making*. That plan which emerges finally, after discussion and reflection, as the winner reflects

supposedly the goal of the entire planning process. Some adjustment between the two is often inevitable. The church must appreciate the need for realism. In fact the "American Way" in civic readjustment as elsewhere calls for bargaining between the private and the public interest. Two difficulties arise. Much of the negotiation, much of the give and take, much of the lobbying, is undercover. It is often next to impossible to pin things down. Surmises, shadow and suspicion are sometimes the only clue the public at large may have of what is actually occurring and these, clearly, may be false clues. At this point the church, too, will be hampered by lack of black-and-white knowledge. It cannot act on dubious evidence. Still it must be alert. Through combination with other civic groups within the community it can watch dog the development of the plan, it can check the goal against the specific project and, if they don't jibe, it can ask frankly why. The second difficulty stems from the first. There will be times when the church gets to estimate the plan only after preliminary work is done and at least the beginnings of a fait accompli face the community. Much as a president confronting a bill and having no power of item veto, the church must then weigh the total human impact of this proposal against its drawbacks. So long as our American procedure in civic readjustment remains so often a matter of private-public cooperation, miracles are impossible and the church must make do at times with half happy solutions.

iv. *Effectuation*—Despite the wide general secularism of our generation, there are many community situations in which the individual and/or collective church wields influence. Analyzing two poles of opin-

ion, one of which sees the church as wholly apart from society and the other which estimates the church as a transforming social force, here is one conclusion:¹²

Wherever one places himself on the continuum even those who deny any hold of religion on their lives must admit that it is an extremely powerful force in our society.

What we speak of here, lest there appear to be a conflict with our earlier analysis of the church in contemporary society, is an on-the-spot particular influence rather than a compelling philosophy of and for the changing community. This influence, we readily concede, is not always exercised in the common good. In one city we were told by a highly responsible newspaperman—"the only time the church hollered was when it was hurting itself, never in the community interest!" In another instance, when a whole neighborhood was up for renewal (via nearly total clearance) we listened to a procession of impassioned witnesses from a particular school-parish combination within the neighborhood. Not one word was spoken about the future of the neighborhood as a whole. The whole pitch was selfish. Give us our pound of flesh, it almost seemed the church was saying, and the devil take the rest of this neighborhood! Obviously, there is every justice for concern with specific church situations. But surely not this alone. The church needs always to rise to the longer look in civic readjustment. First item on the agenda of the pastor in an urban renewal area, for instance, ought to be—what kind of leadership, positive or negative, should the personnel of my parish provide to the citizens of this area in terms of the goal and plan enunciated

¹² Hallenbeck, Wilbur and Brunner, Edmund. *American Society: Urban and Rural Patterns*. Harper and Brothers, New York, 1955, p. 496.

for it? The church in effectuation will also operate in citizen participation. This is by law part of much planning. Where it is not required, it is nearly always included in one form or another in the planning process. Debate continues as to the technique and weight of such participation. What citizens should be involved? How much importance should be attached to their opinion? In the event of a responsibly dissident citizenry then what? The church from her pulpits, in her press and in her colleges as well as in her local and regional social action units will want to be attentive to such questions. More fundamental, even, is the role of the church in stimulating greater individual civic responsibility. It seems to us urgent that the church more and more promote in these days of rampant selfishness a continuing awareness of the idea of commonwealth and a strong recognition of personal obligations vis-à-vis the community. Once again, at the effectuation stage of the planning process there is need for vigilance. Plans have been known to change, sometimes for the better, often to suit a narrow private advantage. Someone must focus on the course of planning. This, no doubt, is a task for a collection of civic and semi-public agencies. The church does well to participate in such a collection preserving in it a very vital freedom of judgment.

With this brief inquiry into the planning process, it's interesting now to note some of the suggestions for church action in Planning which have been made in recent years. There is, of course, much more in the record. These few samples will show the general direction of comment.

For some time now the National Council of Churches has had a Department of the Urban Church.

This Department has done very considerable exploration in the area of urban readjustment. Its pamphlet on urban renewal says: ¹³

The stakes in the human gains and losses in the urban building and rebuilding process is perhaps the most significant one for the Church . . . In this stake, the Church by its own tenets is bound to be involved at every level of the renewal process—the individual, the social structure, government, the physical structure.

Among the goals proposed for the churchman in an urban renewal situation are these: ¹⁴

1. "comprehensive and intensive analysis of present and projected redevelopment programs in every metropolitan region . . .
2. . . . development of trained, able planning leadership for the Church to participate with the city planners . . .
3. . . . development of a theological understanding of the renewal and redevelopment process."

Writing in a New York City context, two experts in urban readjustment are equally emphatic in their judgment that the church is important: ¹⁵

1. The church can "arouse the people of any given neighborhood to cooperate with one another and with the City government."
2. The church can "minister to the needs of persons forced to live in unhygienic and

¹³ "The Church's Stake in Urban Renewal", Department of the Urban Church, 475 Riverside Drive, New York 27, N. Y., 1959. 60¢.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Levy, Beryl and Siegel, Shirley. "Toward City Conservation", League of West Side Organizations, 200 W. 72nd St., New York, 1959.

cramped conditions—unhygienic mentally as well as physically—or who may be forced to move.”

3. “Our churches can augment through their preachments the solvents which will keep smooth human relations flowing among diverse races and religions.”

In setting up Britain’s New Towns Program (see Appendix A) the churches were recognized as important factors in community organization and at least some of the churches have demonstrated a keen awareness of the moral problems incident in civic readjustment in the New Towns.

The National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials in its “Journal of Housing” makes these suggestions relative to “Churches and Public Agencies”:¹⁶

1. “The church needs to have full understanding and knowledge and . . . then communicate this . . . to its congregation.”
2. The church must “stimulate city-wide citizen groups, as well as neighborhood citizen groups.”
3. There should be “encouragement of church people to serve on official or quasi-official bodies, to reflect the views of the people of the areas in which they live.”
4. The church should help provide “the necessary moral and other support for creating equal housing opportunities for all.”
5. The church should “assist in providing newcomers to a neighborhood with an under-

¹⁶ June, 1959. 1313 East 60th Street, Chicago 37, Illinois.

standing of the existing values within that neighborhood."

In short, without attempting to spell it out any further, there would appear to be several aspects to the planning process at which the church might logically involve itself. The expression of church concern will in each instance, of course, suit the particular circumstances. When we speak here of Planning as a vital vocation we speak of universals rather than specifics.

POINT THREE—*As a church our numbers in Planning today are culpably small.*

This is most probably true in actual count. It is certainly true from the standpoint of visible impact. We have come across a growing number of inquiries detailing church concern for matters at least roughly related to Planning. We have yet to see, with the exception of specific reaction in specific community crises here and there, any study in depth of the role of the church in Planning or any continuing church impact in the area of civic readjustment. Once again it can be claimed that we are starting to skirt the fringes. We begin to notice such items as housing, renewal, suburban adjustment. There is increasing discussion among Catholics at various levels of civic change as it ramifies into the parish. We have yet to see emerging anywhere near that quantity and that quality of material on Planning as a profession which the range of Planning proposals, ideals and actuality certainly suggests! This deficit is serious. It has several facets.

Despite the fact that for more than thirty years there have been faculties of City (expanded later to include Regional) Planning in this country, not one of our church universities offers a degree in the field, and

to the best of our knowledge the number of church institutions which offer even a course in the subject is infinitesimal. Quite the contrary, both inside and outside church intellectual circles, there seems to exist a wide and almost indifferent ignorance relative to the whole idea of Planning. As far as we have been able to observe, the record of speeches, buzz sessions, full-time workshops on Planning items at church conventions is sparse indeed. Pronouncements by church leadership, while more numerous than before, are still so infrequent as to focus attention on the exception rather than the rule. We have already cited some of these exceptions, and we repeat here what we noted there—it is not our thought or purpose to criticize or to diminish what has been done. Nevertheless, we suspect an impartial observer would have to conclude that at this moment at no point within our organizational, educational or pastoral context are we competent to wrestle with Planning as a science of national significance. Says Chicago's Father Greeley:¹⁷

Intelligent participation by the Catholic laity in community efforts to obtain satisfactory housing is still quite small . . . Catholics are practically invisible in the field of city planning . . . A handful of the laity are dedicating their lives to this apostolate, but the vast majority of Catholics are unaware that it even exists.

Says Philadelphia's Dennis Clark:¹⁸

Catholic social action leaders, whose ranks are very thin today, seldom have a good knowledge of these (i.e. housing construction and

¹⁷ Op. Cit., pp. 24, 27.

¹⁸ Op. Cit., p. 135.

market) complexities . . . Catholic social teaching remains isolated from these dynamic areas of social change.

Our Christian confreres sense the same problem. "Churches in America have lost much of their social concern" is one comment.¹⁹ "More neglected now than it has been for decades is the subject of Christian faith and social responsibility" is another.²⁰

With society in ferment vertically and horizontally, the lack of prepared church response to community need in this direction is striking. Proportionate to our numbers in the nation, our Planning commitment is small. Proportionate to the scope of the vocation, our Planning commitment is pitiful!

POINT FOUR—*There is decisive need for the articulation of a natural law approach to city and regional Planning.*

It is, perhaps, not entirely accurate to liken Planning to a needle hovering between two poles—the physical environment (and the disciplines immediately appurtenant thereto) and the social evolution of man (and the disciplines immediately appurtenant thereto). It is, nevertheless, fair to note so far as a polar concept is valid, that the lack to date by and large has occurred at the social pole. Again Dennis Clark:²¹

The philosophical penury of modern social thought is reflected throughout the realm of social studies. In the field of urban studies, it is unusual for works to include any serious examination of the fundamental philosophical issues so vital to the problems of community life . . . This value-free approach stems much

¹⁹ Pope, Dr. Liston, cited in *The Boston Herald*, 14 February 1960.

²⁰ Bennett, Dr. John, cited in *The Boston Herald*, 14 February 1960.

²¹ *Op. Cit.*, p. 144.

more from philosophical confusion than from empirical scruple.

In his brilliant analysis of the British New Towns Program (see Appendix A) Lloyd Rodwin points to precisely this lack of adequate Planning education in the social science area as "the Achilles Heel of British Planning."²²

The planner was taught to think physically, visually, technically. He knew little of the thinking or of the applicability of the social sciences . . . (As a result of New Towns experience there has been a) considerable rethinking of the educational requirements for planners. Emphasis on the social sciences has increased.

No one, of course, can fabricate a slide rule for those goals which the acquaintance with social science is meant to provide for Planning. There will always be debate and pressures and the need for improvisation to meet specific circumstances. It would seem, however, and our initial citation from the President of the American Institute of Planners confirms this, that there is room for further effort at the social pole of Planning. Recently, John T. Howard, head of the Department of City and Regional Planning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, pronounced a Credo for Planners. Before there can be a sound philosophy of Planning, says Howard, there must first be a philosophy of society, a philosophy of government, a sort of explicit "reverence" for human dignity. Howard believes such a philosophy and such a reverence already exist. But nature abhors a vacuum. If as a matter of fact a student of Planning has no such philosophy and no such real rev-

²² Rodwin, Lloyd. *The British New Towns Policy*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1956, pp. 169, 189.

erence, he must create them, however subconsciously he goes about it. What may be happening in some instances is the substitution for such philosophy in depth of individual preferences, memories of half-digested commentaries on "society", a rudimentary course in sociology, the *Weltanschauung* of a popular professor. Rodwin takes some Planning education to task for simply transforming "relatively inexperienced architects, engineers, surveyors and social scientists into hyphenated planners."²³ There is danger too that the young Planning student, without a firm and mature philosophy of "society", may suddenly become a civic arbiter and decide vital social questions with spur of the moment logic and with personal prejudice.

In such a situation, the church must ponder its long-time gospel of a Natural Law. Society is a permanent. Instead of jumping from crisis to crisis in the area of civic readjustment with a kind of ad hoc moral theory, Planning in the eyes of the church must, rather, concern itself with the implementation of the Natural Law in given situations. We concede here as we have elsewhere that the church has a great deal of work to do before the Natural Law has been so specifically interpreted that it can in fact affect particular civic situations. This concession in no way alters the general conclusion—if there is a Natural Law and it binds all men, singly and collectively, clearly it must affect Planning in a major manner.

Whether the Planning profession as such will readily accommodate to our Natural Law teachings is not the important consideration here. Through the graduates of our own Planning Schools and their intellectual output later, we would at least be suggesting a more

²³ *Op. Cit.*, p. 298.

adequate underpinning for the science. We would be setting up a norm, an objectivity about which City Planners could debate. This in itself would be an advance beyond the present confusion.

POINT FIVE—*We need within ourselves as a church a body of research, personnel and technical competence in Planning which will enable us to pronounce freely on important issues of civic readjustment.*

If City Planning were purely a physical science, this might well be otherwise. When it is physical, of course, we can simply take the professional figures. Beyond this, the currents of claim and counter-claim, the confusion and the lobbies, disagreement within the profession itself—all of this operates to suggest the indispensibility of internal action on our part. There are several ways in which this sort of action can come about. We detail them later. Suffice it to repeat our belief that *the church approach to Planning should be well coordinated, carefully competent and should be mounted at operational, vocational and research levels.*

It must be evident by this that we attach a high significance to all those disciplines which operate in current civic readjustment. Some Catholics have long been active in some of these disciplines. Again we salute and applaud them. Still we suspect that they would stand with us when we conclude that in City and Regional Planning action by the church, as laity and as organization, has been to date minimal. We have more to say later about the remedy for this. Suffice it here to suggest that as a church we must take three steps if we concur in the contention of this chapter—namely that City and Regional Planning is indeed a vital vocation in the changing American community.

STEP ONE—*We must organize our own thinking.* The Achilles Heel in our social theory vis-à-vis civic readjustment has been, perhaps, its distance from specifics. Unless we can make our deductions from the Natural Law tangible and programmable, we will never get beyond the classroom and the pulpit. Lorenzo di Medici said to the church of his time—"Yes, yes that's all very well in principle but men are not led by Pater-nosters." Subtracting the bitterness in that remark, there remains a good deal of plain horse sense. Failure in the apostolate of the specific may well leave us no more than benign spectators at a process which, reminiscent of Middletown, goes on beyond our reach.

STEP TWO—*We must organize our own technical facilities for a more coherent apostolate in this area of civic readjustment.*

STEP THREE—*We must more accurately estimate this vital vocation to our young people.* From our own brief experience with Planning, we are already convinced that there is an urgent need for feeding into this influence vocation men (and women) who are fully grounded in our Natural Law teachings.

A few months ago we polled a group of upper class young ladies at a prominent Catholic girls college. We asked them two questions. The first—What is your present vocational objective and why? The second—Suppose you were a Communist what would be your vocational objective and why? The answers we received were revealing. Said one girl in reply to question one—"Teacher (I would have) the advantage of hours for further study." In reply to question two—"Teacher, in order to help the party in training the young." Said another answering the first query—"Teaching. I enjoy doing this. The hours and pay are very good." Answer-

ing the second query—"Teaching again, however the motive would be much different. It would be one of trying to spread the ideals I believe in." A third girl replied to question one—"Social worker. I want to work with people with troubles." To question two she said—"Same one (i.e. social worker) but with a different aim. They (i.e. the Reds) aim at changing our way of life."

We append this postscript because we feel it strikingly illustrates the need for church action *now* to re-direct the thinking of both laity and clergy to the vital vocations of our civilization.

ACTION SPECIFICS

The problem of America today is "how to crowd and still be kind."¹

Robert Frost

One thing is certain. Neither here nor anywhere else is it possible to detail the full specifics of church involvement in the changing American community. And, even were it possible to spell out all pertinent principles, there would still remain much that would have to be played by ear in particular situations.

On the other hand, as Thomas Carlyle put it, "the battle itself is victory." Awareness of need and alertness to the finding of it are in themselves significant. Extension of a few lines of reasoning into our area of study may in itself suggest other lines. The parable of the stamp collector comes to mind. Stamps pass over many desks and before many eyes every day. The great run of mankind ignores them. But the stamp collector examines each stamp to see if it has value or interest to him. So too the church, conscious of a role in the changing community, will check each sizeable civic readjustment to see if there is need for it, to determine the moral aspects if any, to weigh proposals in terms not of private (or parochial) advantage but of the common good.

The questions in this chapter, against the background of four major mystiques, are how and what. There will be some overlapping. Mostly we intend to suggest specific lines of church policy in relation to the

¹ in Cook, Reginald. *The Dimensions of Robert Frost*, Rinehart & Company, New York, 1958, p. 180.

urban, suburban and metropolitan mystique and, with somewhat less emphasis, to the rural mystique. Once again our goal is Action Theory. We do not disperse our conclusions in a medley of possibilities.

Up to this point we've been discussing church in the abstract. Now that we're coming to social action particulars it's perhaps appropriate to recognize specifics within the church as well. The term church includes parishes, dioceses, national and regional units, educational institutions and religious orders. Obviously much of what we say here will apply differently in each category. Some members of the church will be affected only slightly, others obliquely, still others directly. In each instance the church mission in the changing community will have to be further specified. Our purpose here, however, is not to dot the last i's and cross the ultimate t's. We have opted for a structuring of church-in-community around a conscious national thought process. We call for an organized apostolate in each diocese. The breakdown itself is by and large beyond the scope of this inquiry. All Catholics need to be aware of the socio-civic apostolate. Not all share it identically.

We are concerned with what the church can do for and in the civic community and not vice versa. And our term of reference finally is not the historic, nor the ideal, community but de facto the changing contemporary American community.

POINT ONE—Continuing inflation has potentially serious consequences in the changing community. As a moral issue affecting civic readjustment it requires church attention.

Our study so far has dealt almost exclusively with demographic and civic forces in relation to the changing community. It must be obvious, however, that there

are other factors in our national experience which likewise seriously influence the community. We separate and spotlight one such factor here. We place it first among our specifics because its reach is by no means limited to any particular community. It enters each of our mystiques. Its name, in our judgment, is inflation. It means, simply, a steady rise in costs and prices, a steady climb in "the cost of living" in a theoretically uncontrolled economy with a consequent decline in the steady value of the dollar. Since 1945, its pattern has been readily evident in the nation. If, of late, there has been a seeming levelling off in prices, cost hikes at many vital points in the economy would appear to indicate that the problem is still with us. In any case, whether immediately urgent or not, our analysis deals with the cost-price spiral as a principle seriously affecting the changing community. We offer it here without any claim to technical excellence in the field of economics as an example of how forces outside the realm of civics so-called can and do ramify into the area and, therefore, might very properly engage the attention of the church as it confronts the changing community.

There are those who contend that a sort of annual inflation is actually good for America. In the arena of pure economics, we do not here debate that issue pro or con. Whatever its impact elsewhere, however, we do feel that a steady decrease in dollar power and a steady increase in the cost-price area can be negative forces in the changing community. Here are some of the things continuing inflation of the type we have witnessed in the United States generally since the close of World War II can do:

- i. It tends to focus the ambition of individuals and groups on monetary recompense rather than on such

intangible but always important goals as loyalty, service, civic responsibility. Such a focus clearly tends to make the annual hike (e.g. in wages, fringe benefits, salary, profit) more significant and more compelling than the common good should there be a conflict.

ii. It tends seriously to constrict community decision. It tends to remove choice from the area of long-range advantage to the area of what the community can now afford and/or how it can avoid paying a larger bill. If this sort of pressure has always existed in community deliberations, inflation gives it an added urgency and further reduces freedom of community choice.

iii. It tends to increase the dependency of the local community on federal and state monies (and controls). It tends to focus government power, in other words, at those levels at which the most money is available.

iv. It tends to by-pass people with fixed incomes and savings, people who are unorganized or unincorporated, this creating a discontented element in the community and enlarging the drain on community welfare services. In the process it tends to diminish the virtues of individual thrift and individual providence.

v. It tends to oblige the devotion of an inordinate amount of civic time to money matters. In the process, it tends to foster fiscal wrangles, it tends to shorten municipal tempers all along the line. If it is resolutely opposed, even, it seeks in some communities to break down long-established administrative practises in order to accomplish its purpose.

vi. It tends to stimulate often bitter rivalry for gain as between component groups in society not only in the economic but also in the professional category. It tends to reduce some of the most honored professions

at times to little more than intransigent and brutal lobbies. Such disorder is clearly calculated to promote neither peace in society nor the idea of commonwealth.

vii. It tends to penalize private effort and self-reliance if/when mass action seems better calculated to produce immediate money gains. This increases the disintegration in our society of elements of individual enterprise like small business, small labor, the independent family farm. While bigness is not, of itself, bad, the American community has traditionally stressed the worth of individual initiative and local responsibility.

viii. It tends to make it increasingly difficult to fill service vocations in our changing community, sometimes even the so-called influence vocations when the pace of inflation is quicker in other fields of action.

ix. It tends to create vested interests in an annual money climb, and these interests, sometimes careless of the common good, confront many of our communities with serious division.

These are but a few of the evils inflation seems to help let loose in the changing community. The greatest tragedy of all, perhaps, is that so many millions of our people seem to take runaway inflation for granted psychologically, see nothing wrong in the exercise of what seems to be in many instances an annual greed. So long as you get yours and I get mine, let the devil take the hindmost. Who cares about the common good anyway?

We have made this brief excursion not only to point up the civic danger of continuing inflation but also to stress the fact that forces outside planning play major roles in civic readjustment. War would be such a force, so would depression and famine. No force, however, is as apropos to contemporary American society in our judgment as inflation and the essential selfishness

which seems to spawn it. In terms of the changing community if for no other reason, there is decisive need for church study and statement in this area. Now more than ever our American communities need to concentrate more on domestic tranquillity, more on patient planning, less on the dollar sign, less on dollar friction.

POINT TWO—*In the urban environment (i.e. the large, medium and small city) the church can be a symbol of hope, a voice of caution and commonwealth, a strong ally of humane renewal.*

The first foe of many cities today is civic despair.² Born of this despair a further foe is inordinate haste to accept any proffered piecemeal solution to city problems without reflecting too much on its ultimate human consequences. In the one instance the church can counsel hope, in the other caution. From its multiple pulpits the call can go out again and again for individual civic responsibility. It can help marshal its members to the cause of commonwealth, it can play a lead function in citizen participation in downtown planning. For all this, it will want to have developed a concept within itself as to the ideal human situation for the city of tomorrow. Each major proposal must, then, be related to this concept. If perfect coincidence is impossible, at least it falls to the church as spokesman for the common good to demand a minimum feasible deviation.

Secondly, urban renewal constitutes a continuing and multiplying reality in our cities. We need to understand this operation both as launched by the Congress in the Housing Acts of 1949 and 1954 and as it has

² "Our constant aim, which we must pursue with patience and cunning, must be to throw out of action all the forces which make for the opposite of Joy—that is to say, Despair. Despairing Cities! The despair of cities." Le Corbusier in *The City of Tomorrow and Its Planning*, Payson and Clarke, Ltd., New York, 1927, p. 55.

worked out in practise. We need to take a long, cold look at the program itself. We need to listen to voices pro and con from many cities. More than that, we ought never lose sight of the fact that renewal is part of the national "housing program." For further treatment of this important aspect of urbanism in our generation see Appendix B.

In the third place, the present and the future of our urban centers are highly complicated topics. To understand them we have to go a lot deeper than the colored maps, the view-from-the-rectory, the published plans. There are racial minorities to be considered, public housing to be estimated, fiscal and economic realities to be weighed. In the urban scene, too, the church enters an arena of strong and noisy lobbies. From housing hearings in Washington all the way down to letters to the editor, organization is the word for what is said in much urban argument. In the city, too, the press of problems is often more urgent, more strident than in the suburb. We need in no way decry the fact that many highly persuasive individuals and many high power groups are active in urban debate. We do need as a church to use almost extreme caution in weighing up a situation downtown before we pronounce in it. There is an omnipresent danger that active partisanship may obscure the reality of commonwealth.

No matter how we approach it, once we have uttered our hopeful gospel, the church-in-the-city requires technical competence, constant vigilance, investigation far beyond the apparent. Even more than in suburbia, the shape of our urban tomorrow is a matter of private-public cooperation. It would be tragic if the church sat down at urban conference tables or open hearings called to phrase this cooperation, in smiling ignorance. It

would be more tragic if for want of clear knowledge, apostolic courage, competent internal representation we lent our approval to schemes which are not in fact calculated to advantage the long-run common good of the urban community. In the ultimate only technical competence within ourselves can guarantee the purity of our position.

POINT THREE—*In the rural environment (i.e. the small town and the farm primarily in non-metropolitan America) the church can bulwark the community, can assist in agricultural adaptation, can stand side by side with the planners.*

Already in searching the Rural Mystique we have raised the question of its applicability in most of America today. Is the rural atmosphere, even where it survives, that environment which religious and civic leaders for centuries have called a superior moral locale? Can we in fact equate a "factory in the fields" with the prosperous family farm of the last century? In the growing sectors of the nation, is the small town truly rural any more? Given the financial outlay required to farm, given the uncertainty of the farm future, can we honestly recommend agriculture to our young people? Certainly the church needs an apostolate to and for the farmer. It has one in the decades-old National Catholic Rural Life Conference. But all over the world the trend is at least suburban. Conceding our interest in the farmer as farmer, is there a realistic hope of rural survival qua rural for most of the people in our changing American community?

Change there has certainly been in our rural areas as well as in our urban areas. Perhaps the time has come for an entirely new demographic terminology to distinguish between Down Town and Our Town. Still the

Rural Mystique survives. Its first and most obvious member is the farmer. As a church we need to concern ourselves with his position in society even though we may have more and more to abandon our traditional view of his profession as a wonderfully good "way of life." Automation in the form of man-saving devices hit the farmer early. His numbers have been progressively declining since way back in the first years of this century. Still, here again, we must face not the part but the totality of things. If the farmer faces compounded problems in our generation, in many cases those problems reflect a distortion in the economy as a whole. If the farmer comes begging at the national money tables, the fault must be assessed fairly and squarely beyond the apparent. There are several questions the church will want to ask itself here. Once upon a time, in tune with the Rural Mystique, the American farm was by and large a symbol of independence, of a sort of homespun reverence, of thrift and self-reliance. Much of this has changed. Farmers today clamor for a subsidy their great grand parents would have scorned as "socialism." We strongly suspect the change has come not so much in the farmer as in the society in which he subsists. If he could go it reasonably alone, we believe the average American farmer like his grand parents would overwhelmingly decide against further subsidy and would reject mass action. The brutal point is he can't and keep his head above water. Is the custom of his grand parents, then, proven wrong? Does the fact that the farmer is today getting the dirty end of the stick in an organized economy prove that individualism, free enterprise and a free market are no longer valid philosophies in America? Or is "the system" itself cock-eyed which reduces agriculture to its present status? Is farm "subsidy"

in fact hush money doled out by a society with a guilty conscience? These are but a few of the questions we as a church must ponder before we take position in the farm crisis. We shall have to ponder, too, such matters as the changing emphasis in farming. It is now estimated, for instance, that one farmer dollar in every three comes from off-farm or non-farm connected sources. It is further estimated that whereas back in 1930 less than $\frac{1}{8}$ of our farm operators worked off the farm one hundred or more days per annum, by 1958 "about a third of all farms were operated as part-time or residential units."³ These are matters we shall have to wrestle with as we approach rural farm America.

The Rural Mystique includes also small community living. If there are values in such living, then the church will need to work more and more in its social action and in its youth direction to stress those values. Obviously there has to be a cut-off point in any salesmanship of the Rural Mystique. If every family chooses to live in a small community, it soon ceases to be a small community. Still if there are values in life untrammelled by metropolitan tensions, the church ought to include that life importantly in the disjunction of choice with which it confronts its youth. One commentator says more must be done:⁴

No group in modern society has a bigger stake in the survival of the small community than the Christian church. Christianity is founded upon the principle of the sanctity of the individual. It believes that man, the individual, has a dignity and a purpose in life and that to attain that dignity he must live in harmony with the uni-

³ Land, *Op. Cit.*, p. 303.

⁴ Tate, H. Clay. *Op. Cit.*, p. 59.

verse. To attain such harmony man must live and work and play in an environment which gives him dignity and purpose and fulfillment. Today's urbanized, centralized society does not provide that climate. The small community does . . . Decentralization is a matter of survival for Christianity. And, since Christianity is the source and strength of our civilization, decentralization must be encouraged or that which we cherish is lost.

In any case, changing though it is in our time, we have generations of testimony to the value of the local community. Much of the trend of witness is already evident in our discussion above of the Rural Mystique. Even with the change, the small community still embodies values preferable to or at least of equal worth with the anonymity of the large city. More and more we should lend ourselves as a church as catalytic agents for programs and personalities concerned with strengthening the small community. Let there be no mistake about it, if small community living is to survive on a wide scale in America, it will survive only via careful planning. Clarence Perry called for "neighborhood" planning on an urban scale. The small community is in fact "neighborhood" planning on a national scale.

POINT FOUR—In a suburban environment to which the nation increasingly congregates, the church can promote intelligent blending, can encourage careful planning, can speak out loudly for citizen responsibility and in the name of the common good.

Suburbs, our study of the Middle Mystique shows, range over a wide area—all the way from Levittown to Bucks County. In many of them it's already too late for anything but tears. All the land has been taken. The

pattern of tomorrow has been laid in a piece-meal, helter-skelter confusion. In others and in communities not yet quite suburban there is some time left. But time is dangerously short.

Beyond the bitter books and the sarcastic cartoons, the primary service of suburbia in society, it would seem, is to provide a multiple choice residential situation near the nation's major cities. Such a service, however, will not just happen. If suburb is to differ from suburb, if we are to avoid a sprawling monotony of look alike towns and look alike highways, immediate action is required. At the local level, the suburb must look far beyond the details, however insistent they are, of planning. The church in the suburb can sound loud trumpets for long-range community programming. It cannot, of course, be a matter of individual town versus total metropolitan good. It can and must be a matter of awakening suburbia and its officials to the urgent need for prompt and tough action if there is to be any variety at all left by 2000 in our metropolitan areas.

The urgency of the church apostolate vis-à-vis this Middle Mystique is doubled by the statistics which testify relentlessly to the suburbanization of the nation. This out-going of cities catches us at something of a disadvantage. Imperfect as church social action may be downtown, at least there it grounds in generations of close personal contact. In suburbia where the great push comes, the church is historically more of a stranger. Catholics have not been familiar by and large until recent years with the small community, with the rural community. One thing, above all, is important here. Whatever its past, the American church in suburbia must move out beyond nostalgia. The suburb is here to

stay. It does no good either to curse the tide coming in or to stand in a sand castle of souvenirs and pretend the incoming waves won't reach you.

Another aspect of suburbia which demands church attention is the need for and the possibility of blending. New and old sit down together in most suburban neighborhoods. The traditions of the one and the enthusiasm of the other can join to fabricate a compromise sort of community in which the best of both survives. Or it can be otherwise. The community can break down into warring factions. Subdivision lobbies and ad hoc pressure groups can run hot irons of discord through the commonwealth. Church suppers make excellent locations for that type of "love feast" which dulls the edge of suspicion and snobbery. Spiritual Welcome Wagon operations help to integrate the newcomer more pleasantly in the changing community and in the local church. Sermons on civic togetherness should come naturally from the suburban pulpit. Most of all the common purpose and the common future need to be spotlighted. It must not be supposed, however, that in such a blending all will be sweetness and light. The common interest cannot be promoted without impeding some of the desires of interests vested in the private good. In suburbia, besides tact, the church will require courage, perseverance, sometimes even the strength to resist the importunity of some of its own important parishioners.

For all its frayed edges, we are convinced, the subject matter of this Middle Mystique is an entity unto itself. It cannot be simply filed in the "urban" drawer. It represents, at the very least, an unconscious rejection of traditional urbanism. It's not simply "rural" either, but it does constitute a highly significant step by an increasing majority of our people back toward relatively

open space, back toward relatively face-to-face government and single dwelling residence. A few years ago the author wrote: ⁵

It must be abundantly evident that the American suburbanite has emerged for study, science and religion as a definite individual. He is no more a farmer than he is a tenant of a three-decker. He is in a class by himself literally and figuratively. He must be approached as such. No warmed over farm philosophy will hold him. He is not a dependent of the great farms that stretch out beyond him. No warmed over urban philosophy will hold him. He has now an independence, property, sun, light, air, which he never enjoyed in the city.

The church can help develop a philosophy and a science for this suburbanism. It does so with apologies to none, with commitment to the nostalgia of no yesterdays. Through all the turmoil and confusion, one fact remains paramount. Suburbia needs moral guidance and spiritual leadership as it continues to absorb the greater bulk of the nation. The physical future of the Middle Mystique must be a matter of intelligent civic decision and not of rampant private profit. The church must estimate such items as zoning, the Master Plan, subdivision control in this larger context. This is, perhaps, the first task but involved in it constantly is the ultimate task of hammering out a theology of suburban living.

POINT FIVE—*In much of America the crowding of our communities brings strong pressure for some sort of metropolitanism. This pressure is natural, basically wise.*

⁵ *Opportunities for Catholic Leadership in the Suburbs*, the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, Des Moines, Iowa, 1956, p. 7.

It will grow. The church should approach each specific metropolitanist proposal beyond the purely services category with caution.

The common good, ultimately, is the good of all human creation. In the gamut from this to the individual good, surely, an intermediate stage might well be the metropolitan good. Such a good proposes the mutual advantages, duties and responsibilities of communities whose function and out-reach intermingle more or less significantly. If the citizen has obligations vis-à-vis his particular community that community itself has obligations in the larger community of which de facto it forms a portion.

Discussing the Metropolitan Mystique above, we have already had occasion to touch on some of the subsequent thinking. We repeat a little here. There are things important for the future of our people which cannot be done, or cannot be done adequately, on an individual community basis. Open space for active and passive recreation, for instance, cannot be preserved within driving reach of our major city-suburb complexes except through some form of overall Green Belt planning. If it is desirable that new roads, shopping centers, industry penetrate the metropolitan area with a minimum of disturbance and a maximum of convenience, then overall planning is vital. If it is desirable that "strip city" be forestalled, that a multiple choice residential situation be safeguarded in suburbia, that dwelling unit growth at high densities be balanced off against industry, that vestiges of rural living be bulwarked, then overall planning is decisive. There is room for question as to the mode and method of such planning. There is no room for doubt as to the need now for something in this direction in great areas of the nation.

Many horses have already been stolen from the metropolitan barn, this is true, but if we don't lock the doors pretty soon there'll be no horses at all left inside to protect when we do.

Nevertheless, here as elsewhere in civic readjustment, there is place for caution. The leap from the known to the unknown is always critical. Practical metropolitanism is still new. Toronto has done it via a federal amalgam of city and suburbs. Dade County, Florida, has done it by tying city and county together in "Metro." Communities in the Los Angeles area are linked roughly together in a giant "urban county" situation.⁶ In many of our big cities there are regional planning associations, regional reports, recurrent regional editorials. There remain many questions to be answered before the metropolitanist position is so clear it can be widely recommended to the nation as a matter of fundamental policy. For instance, what shall be the exact scope of the planning operation? This has been the crux of much discussion. Shall planning be advisory simply? Shall it be, rather, decisive and binding on all member communities? If the latter solution is selected,

⁶ In Toronto, elected mayors in each of the suburbs serve on the metropolitan board. In other plans, election to the governing unit would be by direct ballot of all citizens in the proposed metropolitan area. In others, each of the component communities is allotted a specific share of control on somewhat a similar basis to that used in filling the federal Congress. Powers allotted at the overall level likewise differ in the several metropolitan plans. Mostly, planning is pictured as an advisory function. In Toronto, jurisdiction of the planners extends one community beyond the actual metropolitan boundaries in every direction. Already in a number of close-in urban areas a sort of metropolitanism in the purely services category is functioning. Services covered are, variously, water supply, transit, sewer disposal. The difficulty in debate over many metropolitan plans comes when an effort is made or suspected to subject local option in land use planning to rigid metropolitan direction. At this point, many suburbs balk. For further details on the techniques suggested for metropolitanism in America the reader is referred to an increasing literature.

what happens to local option; if the former solution is preferred how do the overall planners "get things done?" Another question involves apportionment. Shall units of local government be represented in metropolitan control bodies or simply local citizens throughout the metropolitan area? Biggest problem may well come on the issue of ultimate policy. Abercrombie, proposing his Greater London Plan back in the days of World War II, suggested strongly that the central city must be contained, that urban bulge must be halted or at least very closely pin-pointed to the ultimate advantage of the suburban hinterland. In Toronto, on the other hand, the thesis of metropolitanism seems to be that the central city must be permitted to grow further, that this growth must be facilitated and accommodated rather than resisted even though in the process urbanism reaches further and further out into suburbia. Which policy will prevail? Which policy offers the greater good to the greater number? Another important query which must be directed toward the metropolitan evangelists is—*cui bono*? For whose advantage and to what actual purpose shall we tamper with our traditional civic individualism? When, for long decades, our rural areas lost millions of their children to our cities, no one proposed a metropolitan arrangement which would shore up the declining rural position. There is, on the other hand, a very definite suspicion today that metropolitanism is being pushed as a sort of save-the-big-city crusade.

What is clearly needed here in the metropolitan arena is church social action independent of any obligations and prejudices but the obligations and prejudices of our concern for the good of society as a whole. In fact central city and suburb do have certain important correlative activities. Much of suburbia, but increas-

ingly less, works downtown. Libraries, zoos, theaters, banks, courts in the core city are significant to many suburbanites. Central city roads, public transportation and civic services are in fact heavily utilized by traffic originating in and destined for suburbia. On the other hand, suburbs educate the children of millions whose work is the economic strength of downtown. On weekends, suburbia draws thousands from the city. More and more shopping and "culture" are decentralizing to suburbia. The list of correlation is long. The point is short. There is no justification for bitterness on either side. The conclusion is brief. There ought to be neither a save-the-city nor a save-the-suburb bias to metropolitanism. Supporters of common action by city and suburbs do their cause a distinct dis-service when they preach only in terms of the present plight and future profit of either of them but not of both of them. Unless metropolitanism hits the polling places with clear pluses for both suburbia and downtown it will probably never happen in America except by federal fiat. Through all this, the church will need to weigh each specific proposal carefully. Inefficient and awkward as what we now have may well be, at least it has been tested and it expresses the traditional value we have assigned to local option. Our civic anachronisms may be costly, but we will want to be pretty sure before we trade them in that we are not getting in exchange a monolithic new leviathan ruthlessly dedicated to a partisan advantage in the city-suburb dichotomy.

POINT SIX—*A department of urban affairs (at the federal cabinet level) has been and is being suggested. The church is not concerned with the politics of this. However, such a department could conceivably have*

an important social consequence in the changing American community. Church social action should approach this subject with much caution.

It is already abundantly clear that neither our cities nor our farms are growing. What is growing is the metropolitan area. Semantically, then, if there is to be a new federal department it should be a Department of Metropolitan rather than a Department of Urban Affairs.

Beyond this, an overall social concern will suggest that representation in the direction and staffing of such a department be accorded proportionately to the weight of the several components of our metropolitan areas. It would be tragic, but we fear quite possible, for the new department to become nothing more than a lobby for downtown urban interests. It would be equally tragic, of course, if it were to become simply a table-thumper for suburbia. Realism compels us, however, to suspect that in the current situation the greater danger lies in the first possibility. One has only to analyze the record of the Department of Labor and the Department of Agriculture to appreciate the danger to the unrepresented partner in our Standard Metropolitan Areas if in fact a new Department of Urban Affairs saw its responsibility as resting with but one sector of the metropolitan area.

In short, if we are to have a federal department, let it accord with the facts. Let it be a Department of Metropolitan Affairs in action as well as in theory. Let it be an across-the-board authority looking calmly at our changing community in terms of commonwealth and not simply a sounding board for partisan demands. Above all, let it honestly represent suburb and core with the hegemony to neither.

In summation as in starting we concede that there will be many questions arising in the specifics of church social action in civic readjustment which we have not here answered. Our recommendations as we approach these specifics, however, remain the same as those we have enunciated on a more general plane. With internal competence, contact, objectivity and great caution the church can meet the changing community in mutual advantage. And, surely, the "dabitur vobis" will not be wanting where the will is right.

PROBLEMS AND PROGRAM

The problem of the corporate church when it attempts to take relevant moral stands on real moral issues is very much the same as that of the individual preacher in his pulpit. Nobody complains if he keeps general enough. He will be applauded for general exhortations about love, generosity, peace, unselfishness and all the other Christian aims and virtues so long as he doesn't get down to cases. Nathan was in no trouble with King David until he said—"Thou art the man."¹

There is no room whatsoever for doubt as to the delicacy of the operation we propose. As a church our primary and over-riding purpose is "not of this world." Beside this paramount consideration, the dignity of our foundation and objectives must warn us away from haste, from committing ourselves to points of view which are essentially partisan and not in the general interest. Perhaps better than most of them, we are aware of the value of church support to the various lobbies operating in the area of civic readjustment.

Now that we have faced briefly up to the general approach a social action church might take toward the community in terms of City Planning, we begin the task of hammering together a platform. First the bigger planks, then the smaller, more specific ones. In our ultimate purpose of phrasing Action Theory for the church in the changing community, emphasis shifts now from theory to the action aspect.

This chapter will over-look the situation as we see it. Mostly we state opinions. There is no claim here of

¹ Blake, Dr. Eugene Carson, as reported in *The United States News and World Report*, 2 May 1960, p. 101.

anything resembling infallibility. If we delay neither with dialectics nor with shades of argument, the reason is simply that we are seeking to put together a positive model for church civic action, a model which can then be debated in and outside of the church. From such a model in God's time there may ultimately emerge a more mature church program vis-à-vis the changing American community.

Once again, the point system.

POINT ONE—*Church involvement in the commonwealth is still a subject teeming with serious question.*

Even when the church itself is not directly concerned—e.g. in a candidacy for the office of president of the United States—honest men disagree as to the right role of “religion” in “politics.” Here, however, something more is involved. We are suggesting, much in the manner of our labor-management procedure in another generation, that the church itself take a more or less official stand in civic readjustment. It is reasonable to suppose that in such a context there will be disagreement, question, compelling need for caution and precision.

We could illustrate our point in many ways. Our title quotation is one way. Perhaps one further anecdote and a sequence of citations will suffice. It seems there was a southern colored preacher. One hot Sunday he addressed his flock. “Brethren, we must all hate sin!” Response: “Amen.” “Brethren, we must all love our neighbors.” Again: “Amen.” “Brethren, we must all fight the devil.” Another “Amen.” “Brethren, we must all stop stealing chickens.” A loud voice from the congregation: “Preacher, yo’ is meddlin’.”

Our sequence we select because of its currency, also because in a few words it hits to the heart of the contro-

versy. Actually it developed not within the Catholic church but within a neighbor Christian denomination. Each theoretical challenge to church social action will not necessarily run the same course. This one, however, seems remarkably typical.

On 19 March 1960, speaking before the National Council of United Presbyterian Men in Chicago, J. Howard Pew, an oil magnate, had taken the "church" to task for its social action pronouncements. Mr. Pew brought three principal charges. First, social action champions within the church have no authority to commit church membership to their positions and in fact they sometimes speak contrary to the prevalent views of at least a wide number within that membership. Second, and Mr. Pew used these words: ²

Many of those who are primarily responsible for these statements have neither the knowledge nor the competence to make them . . . I am an old man. For 60 years, most of my time and energy has been devoted to the oil industry. It might be possible for me to give an intelligent answer to 10 per cent of the problems incident to petroleum . . . Is it possible for this social-action group, or any other group of men, to have the knowledge and the competence to pass judgment on the whole gamut of human relationships?

Third, and again we cite Mr. Pew: "The corporate church should not go into politics . . . It has no mandate to meddle in secular affairs." ³

² *The United States News and World Report*, 25 April 1960, pp. 133, 134.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 133.

One month later in an address at Colgate-Rochester Divinity School, Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, Chief Executive of the United Presbyterian Church, United States of America, challenged the Pew position: ⁴

The current attempt to avoid religious bigotry in politics by relegating the Christian faith and church membership of a candidate to a place of complete irrelevance is proof enough of how secular a society ours has come to be . . . By a secular society I mean that which is common throughout what used to be called Christendom in which the church or the churches have been one way or another pushed to the periphery of the real areas of decision . . . The churches stand at one side, silent and irrelevant except when they may be exploited on one side or another of the contest for power.

The "church", said Dr. Blake, has a clear right and responsibility to intervene in "secular affairs" when there are moral issues involved. ⁵

One week after publishing Dr. Blake's address, the magazine which hosted the controversy carried an editorial under the title—"Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's." In it the editor plays Mugwump with consolation for both sides and approval for neither. On the one hand: ⁶

The collaboration . . . of churchmen and citizens in a community to improve the social

⁴ Blake, *Op. Cit.*, p. 100.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 102. Dr. Blake sets up standards for the churchman in social action. He must take positions "soundly based theologically and Biblically." He must "preach in love and hope." He must be "competent enough in the areas of social application." He must be "not arrogant." He must "risk being wrong rather than to be silent and safe."

⁶ Lawrence David, *The United States News and World Report*, 9 May 1960, P. 123.

welfare of people is, of course, desirable and proper.

On the other hand: ⁷

Churchmen who engage in politics lose the confidence of laymen and tend to become partisans rather than objective instrumentalities of spiritual help.

Instances could be multiplied. These few suffice. Condemn the process though we may, in fact our society is not church-oriented. The Western world has moved far since, rightly or wrongly, churchmen were arbiters of civic dispute.

There is no easy solution to the basic dilemmas involved here. But to accept the doctrine of total exclusion because to do otherwise will create controversy is most surely not the answer. Personally we like to distinguish between the civic interest and "politics." In the one, the church has every right and often every duty to take part. In the in-fighting, the campaign routine, the personalities of the other the church has no place. But even here we cannot say—well, fine, here's a way out, let's fold our hands and proceed accordingly. It is not always easy to mark off the civic interest from "politics." One way is to define the civic interest as tall principle divorced from dirty details. But we have already pointed out the conclusion to which such reasoning might well lead us! If as a church we remain general, we may continue to contrive bowed heads at civic invocations, but we will never accomplish anything tangible until we support particular programs in the public interest (which, incidentally, have particular backers and may well be part of particular "platforms"). And is this not, in fact, "politics?" This is the heart of the

⁷ Ibid.

matter. It will not be simply resolved. One thing, however, is certain—any concerted effort, however proper, to re-introduce a close connection between religion and the changing community will provoke controversy.

POINT TWO—*As a matter of hard fact, further church involvement in the commonwealth will almost certainly be subject to serious internal question.*

Despite decades of church anathema on “secularism”, many of our own people will and do find it hard to accord the church a place in civil society. Some of this is simply the inertia of a bad intellectual habit. Some of it is poor arithmetic. If the sequestration of the church from “secular affairs” even in their moral content is wrong, then it follows as the night the day that the church has a role to play in society beyond hymnals and Sunday school. Some of it is wholly inexcusable since it stems from Catholics whose educational competence should long since have familiarized them with the spiritual reality of the situation.

Further internal question will be raised by interests vested in civic solutions other than those we shall, to the best of our moral vision, propose. Likewise, if our words do not accord with the design of the various lobby groups in the area of civic readjustment, we may well anticipate an *ad hominem* argument, maybe even a “whisper campaign” against us.

Too recent for full analysis in these pages is the furore in Puerto Rico over pastoral letters calling for the defeat of Governor Munoz Marin. Nevertheless it seems clear that much the same situation as that to which we make reference in these pages was involved here. Church leadership, unanimously, felt that the time for specifics had arrived and that a moral stand had to be promulgated relative to a particular program and a

particular personality. Our presumption must remain that this stand was taken only after long deliberation and careful weighing of the consequences. So certain was the hierarchy of the rightness of its position that it penalized as sinful the act of voting for Governor Marin. And yet by overwhelming majority Catholic Puerto Rico defied its Bishops and supported its Governor. We do not, repeat, we do *not* pass judgment on the whole affair. We do not have full details available to us. Nevertheless, what we do have clearly indicates the sense of the point we are now making. Further church action in the community forum may well be subject to extensive internal controversy.

There may also very possibly rise within our ranks that group to which Dr. Blake has made reference in our title citation. These are they who will welcome us, will wine and dine and bemedal us so long as we stick to platitudes and smiles but will resent us when our specifics start to tread on their private toes. In the matter of civic action we have lingered long in the platitudes and smiles category. Very likely when we emerge from it, we shall lose some of our fair weather friends.

Attempts may arise, too, to divide our clergy from our laity. If the one is more active than the other in pushing a given social action apostolate, if the one tries to restrain the other, there are grounds for internecine dispute.

POINT THREE—*Further church involvement in the commonwealth will certainly be subject to serious external question.*

The presumption here is that our position has been approached with prayer, tact and technical competence. Despite this, it will provoke external opposition. It will be objected that we have our own axes to grind,

that we are taking position to advantage and extend our own church organization. If our decision separates from the decision of other church and civic groups, its honesty and competence may be challenged. Professionals, for reasons objective or subjective, may dissent from our conclusions and resent our having pronounced them. Partisan interests anxious to limit our influence and malign our motives, may seize the chance to redouble their attacks. Those who disbelieve in a Natural Law, still more those who are indifferent to religion in general, may well find it difficult to accept church intrusion in what to them should remain a wholly temporal function. The forces of anti-religion will exacerbate the situation.

POINT FOUR—*Given these difficulties, given the chance of misunderstanding, further church involvement in the commonwealth must be carefully phased and closely directed.*

As a matter of overall policy in this critical area we cannot afford the luxury of denominationalism. Hasty comments, loosely official organizations, varying anathemas, conflicting editorials on basic points of civic policy—these could conceivably do us much harm. Certainly there will remain at the fringes here as elsewhere in church social action room for responsible Catholics to disagree. From the pattern of our increasing experience, from the fundamental moral unity of the Natural Law, however, it should be possible for us to build up a body of principle which will enable us all to take off from the same place. The Bible warns that toward the end of time, men will come to the nations and say—Behold, He is in the desert. Behold, He is by the sea. Behold, He is in the mountains. These men, the Bible advises, are not true apostles but deceivers. The net

result, obviously, is confusion. The same danger may well exist in the social action field. For want of mature preparation, considered direction and objective detachment, Catholics in various places with various types of organization, association and control may seem to speak for the church and with widely varying voices. A delicate balance must be struck here. We have equally to avoid the twin extremes of a central dictation which stifles individual intellectual initiative and a vague centrifugalism which might well operate to dilute our purpose and obscure our gospel. Perhaps what is most needed now in the beginning, as was the case with our approach to labor-management in another generation, is a series of carefully prepared hierarchical pronouncements setting the pace and pointing the way. Then, once the general moral lines of policy are in place, individual Catholics and individual Catholic groups can set to work implementing and applying theory to fact.

In some countries (e.g. Canada, France) for several decades now there have been church Social Weeks. These are designed to bring together Catholics from many walks of life to discuss current social action problems. It is, perhaps, not forward to suggest here that the time has arrived in America when such across-the-board social conclaves are desirable.

We have already hinted above at the difficulty which may well arise in the matter of accommodating both lay and clerical participation in the social action apostolate. Our own thinking here is relatively simple. Certainly lay Catholics speaking as American citizens have every right to take civic position. Certainly, too, the average priest is not nor can he be expected to be qualified to pontificate on that wide range of social questions with which some of our laity are daily ac-

quainted. Certainly, again, the church is and remains a hierarchical group. The use of its name and/or its influence in any way must be most carefully circumscribed and subject to hierarchical control. A Catholic layman, with no personal commitment and with wide background in secular and church social science, might well propose to interpret for the church in society. A Catholic layman with deep personal commitment to a partisan cause in civic readjustment can, conceivably, detach himself from that commitment when he seeks to speak for the church. There is a very real danger, however, that partisan thinking may seriously influence what should be a wholly unbiased judgment. The same danger sometimes exists for the social action priest, but because he has no bread-and-butter commitment to this group or that group in society presumably it will be less difficult for him to maintain a detached position. What we feel ourselves, and we listen to the debate in Catholic circles on this matter with continuing concern, is that by and large the technical aspects of Catholic social action will be better handled by the laity. There is urgent need, however, in close contact with each Catholic social action effort for a priest himself technically competent in the area of concern. As in any church undertaking in such a relationship the clergy must respect the secular wisdom of the laity and the laity in turn must acknowledge the spiritual direction of the clergy. As we read current debate in the matter, such an arrangement would tend to eliminate two recurring complaints. The first complaint specifies that the free-wheeling lay group with no active priest moderator may tend, often unwittingly, to fit the general principles of the church into the particular economic and political moulds of its membership rather than vice versa. This

complaint further specifies that such a group may tend to become unduly autonomous with little respect for hierarchical decision and, sometimes, with contempt for those who disagree with it. The second complaint specifies that the clergy by and large are not psychologically or technically competent to give honest direction to lay social action groups. This complaint points to the wide dearth of trained Catholic clergy in the social action arena. It specifies, further, that far too often local clergy are unable to take a broad viewpoint of problems even community-wide problems, that they tend to see things in terms of the parish only and that, nevertheless, they insist on rigid domination of a social action apostolate whose chaplaincy they assume under protest and whose whole purpose they inwardly question. Each of these complaints, obviously, has been stated in its extreme form. An understanding of each, we feel, is important to a broad comprehension of the existing discussion of the lay apostolate among Catholics. We need not dwell on it further in these pages. The important thing, if we need to reiterate it, is for the church, exploiting to the full the talent and office of its laity and its clergy, to over-look the whole matter, to come to an objective decision, and to maintain that decision let the temporal chips fall where they may!

POINT FIVE—*Given our situation in the nation, further church involvement in the commonwealth should be the task of a specific apostolate.*

There is no denying, of course, that all social action per se involves the society in which it operates. No one office, no one department of the church can ever, should ever pre-empt to itself a field in which existing church groups are working. *What is needed is not displacement but coherence.* Community organization, housing, Plan-

ning, metropolitanism—these are technical and over-riding areas of action in the changing American community. We feel very strongly that in our seminaries, in our chancelries, in our rectories, in our colleges, there is need for contact with someone, some body within the church which has for its specific purpose the exploration and determination of church relationship with and in these areas. No such source agency could ignore or would want to ignore other church social action groups. Far from diminishing or impinging on these groups, in fact, it would strengthen them, link them more adequately and continuously together, feed them theory and fact from which their own operation could be more perfectly mounted. Ultimately, it would fill the little but important vacuums which today seem to exist in our response as a church to community crisis; it would permit centralized research and publicity; it could, for instance, further the sense of City Planning as a vital vocation among our young college people; it could build up a reservoir of speakers, pamphlets, data from across the nation; patiently, tactfully, prayerfully, it could go about the task of hammering together a moral direction for Catholics, lay and clerical, in the face of civic readjustment. Whether such an apostolate exists in or closely allied to the Social Action Department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference is a relatively minor point at this time. What is important is that it have a specific function, a specific personnel and that it be detached from any single one of our specific social action efforts as they presently exist.

We have long since left our ghettos. We have come numerously across the tracks. We are the largest single church in the nation today. At point after point we are right now wrestling with this difficult question—where

and how do we fit into the changing American community? To advance and bulwark our maturity, to fulfill our obligations in society, clearly the time seems to have arrived when we must lift the changing community to the level of a specific church apostolate. If the process will take time, money and generosity and vision, surely the cause is greater than the cost!

What we call for is this: a *Department of Community Relations* at the diocesan and at the national level, to be backed and extended via increased research, vocational and community seminar activity at Catholic colleges.

See Appendix E for further thinking here.

POINT SIX—*There is need for cooperation with other groups in our civic apostolate, but this cooperation needs to be approached in most instances with constant care.*

In "Crisis Downtown" we wrote:⁸

In an area up for renewal, as well as in a bursting new suburb and a perplexed farm community, it would seem the better part of wisdom for the reputable churches and synagogues to join in common service . . . The purpose of such across-the-board organization would be to service the community itself with active social justice. At the same time, we feel, such a group would be welcomed by renewal officials. It would make it that much easier to bring matters to the attention of religious leadership. It would, surely, permit that leadership itself to keep more thoroughly and more realistically au courant of renewal developments.

⁸ "Crisis Downtown", National Conference of Catholic Charities, 1346 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington 6, D.C., December 1959, \$1.25 per copy.

As a church, we will seldom be the only soldier at the gate. There will be other religious groups, civic groups, social welfare groups, vested interest groups more or less obvious. If we stand apart from such groups we may lose strength, we may become ineffective, we will certainly be accused of indifference to the civic problem involved.

There are, however, two clear dangers here. Both stem from the value of church presence in any civic collection. Whether we know what is going on or not, just by being there—with our banquet benedictions and our platform smiles—we do firm up the authority of the group. The first consequent danger is that we may be maneuvered into a position where we lose our freedom of judgment. Sitting down with pleasant special interest people we may find ourselves lulled into acquiescence in something which in fact is not in the best service of the commonwealth. The stakes are often high in civic readjustment, the tongues are smooth and the picture is complex. Where our church concern is part-time, others working the same area are or rely upon professionals. Constant care is in order lest through ignorance we seem to stand on the side of private privilege as against common good. In the second instance, we must be aware of the danger of total mis-direction. We need to ask ourselves at the outset—why was this grouping proposed? Who is its moving forces? Are there preconceived directions being imposed on it? Is it primarily a political business in the sense it is calculated to advantage one political party and/or one political personality? Prince Bismarck used to say that he never asked himself why this or that country at an international conference made a certain request. He simply checked the request against the needs of Germany at the moment and if it happened

to coincide he concurred. We cannot afford to be so practical about our involvement in the civic community. Before we commit ourselves to a civic collection, we need pretty firm assurance that it's i) objective, ii) free, iii) competent.

Glancing back over this chapter, we note in it frequently the word—caution. It may be suggested that we have been here too suspicious, too wary. Our caution, actually, is measured by our fear lest the church fail in one of two areas. The first is failure of church social action to get down to specifics. Christ chased the money changers from the Temple and inveighed at length against Scribes and Pharisees despite possible consequences. Jacques Maritain reminds us: ⁹

The fear of soiling ourselves in entering into the context of history is a pharisaical one. We cannot touch human flesh and blood without staining our fingers. To stain our fingers is not to stain our hearts.

Too often, in fact, we are so timid that the least noise of disagreement scares us off. In our descent from the platitudes to the practical, nevertheless, there is need for eminent care, for huge quantities of Holy Ghost. If anything, to assure a successful apostolate in specifics, we over-stress this need. Our second fear, and it is one not entirely based on theory, is that a naive church might fail honestly to estimate the relative roles of private and public purpose in civic readjustment. We are frankly afraid that in the traffic of interests which presently move in the changing American community the church can be misled. We do not at all question the right of a private party in community upheaval to seek private advantage. We do criticize language and fanfare (and

⁹ Maritain, Jacques. *Treasury*, Op. Cit., p. 123.

professional brochures) which seem to equate what is a partisan position with a purported public good. We do most strongly urge that before the church lends itself to any proposal it must be almost 100% sure that this proposal is in fact for the commonwealth and not simply for private profit, whether that profit be measured in individual or collective measure. Perfection here is impossible, we have already conceded. But, surely, imperfection must be limited to the best achievable minimum.

Beyond this, we have called for but not fully spelled out a new national direction for church action in the changing American community. Paul himself warns of the need for change in things spiritual. When we were children, he tells us, we played with childrens' toys; now that we have become adults we need adult material. It may have been sufficient for the church in earlier decades to fumble and fuss with civic problems on a part-time, wholly general basis. Now, if we are to be effective and objective, we must have an initial competence within ourselves, courage to withstand objection, and a formal, full-time direction.

Most important as a maturing church faces up to the problem we pose is the need to understand that it is not an academic issue only but a terribly real matter. The need for coherent social action on our part here is *now*. Our own position in authoring this study is clear. Suppose, as we come to conclusion, we call in the further witness of two men who have been inspiration to us throughout, the former Cardinal Archbishop of Paris is one; the other is young Dennis Clark, author, houser-humanist of Philadelphia.

Said Dennis Clark within the year: ¹⁰

It is imperative to the mission of the Church in

¹⁰ *Cities in Crisis*, Op. Cit., p. 103.

America that these new currents of energy (i.e. in civic readjustment) be guided by a sound social philosophy. The new profession of urban rebuilder must be penetrated by many competent and apostolically-minded Catholics. It is evident that this whole movement is weakest in the area of social policy and basic goals.

To the people of Paris thirteen years ago, Emmanu-el Cardinal Suhard spoke this message:

No longer hesitate to apply . . . your researches to the domain of civilization . . . The proposition is to construct a new world, to define and prepare structures which will permit man to be fully man in a city worthy of him . . . Have no doubts, dearly beloved, of the results of an action thus pursued in life. At the moment, we will not see the results of your gropings and of your perseverance, but a day will finally dawn in which your children and grandchildren will thank God for the earthly home which you will have prepared for them.

We add only to each of these brilliant analyses an Action Amen!

APPENDIX A

THE CHURCH AND THE NEW TOWNS

The first purpose of the creation of new towns is to provide for the overspill of population which seems bound to emerge when the older towns, on account of enemy action or for other reasons, have to be redeveloped. New towns are the alternative to increased suburban sprawl on the outskirts of existing towns.¹

Britain's New Towns Program is something with which most Americans are quite unfamiliar. A very few have studied the topic with professional concern. Others have picked up a passing acquaintance via Sunday supplements and magazine articles. We don't propose to overcome this ignorance in detail. Nor do we suggest here a definitive sketch of church activity in each of the actual New Towns. We do want to do two things—first, delineate a little for our reader what is for better or for worse one of the more significant planning experiences of the twentieth century. Secondly, we shall take an all too brief look at church reaction to this experience. What meaning the New Towns have in terms of the changing American community remains to be determined. What ultimate meaning they will have even in Britain it is still too early to say.

Back before the century turned (i.e. in 1898) a British clerk named Ebenezer Howard proposed to the people of Britain the golden image of a "Garden City."²

They should forthwith gird themselves to the task of building up clusters of beautiful home-towns, each zoned by gardens, for those who now dwell in crowded, slum-infested cities.

In the years that followed there was some action, much thought and several committees. But the idea of new communities was in the air in Britain. When, finally during World War II, Sir Patrick Abercrombie came out with a Plan for London which included the germ of the New Towns Program, he was not projecting in a vacuum. This Plan proposed that something over 1,000,000 people be "decentralized" from the London "conurba-

¹ Reith Committee, 2d Interim Report, April 1946, p. 3.

² Howard, Ebenezer. *Op. Cit.*, p.

tion." Four rings of population were to be defined around London, in one of which New Towns were to be created which would then accommodate some 40% of the decentralization.

After the War and the Socialist electoral victory, a New Towns Parliamentary Committee (the Reith Committee) was established. This Committee called for a formal New Towns Program and specified these goals for the proposed new communities:

i. to attract population and industry away from London (primarily, though some New Towns were to be situated elsewhere as, for instance, in the Midlands and near Glasgow) thus restricting the outward sprawl of the capital and cutting the vulnerability of Britain in another air war.

ii. to reduce congestion and the physical-psychological drain of "the journey to work" by placing employment within walking distance of residence.

iii. to provide communities of balanced residence and diverse occupational potential.

iv. to combine the convenience and excitement of a small urban situation with interior open space and nearby rural amenity.

v. to focus in one controlling authority all the disciplines necessary to a viable new community thus ensuring harmonious development.

vi. to avoid, by strict density control, undue consumption of valuable close-in agricultural land.

This, then, was the theory. In the event, Britain's experience with the New Towns has been somewhat controversial. About a dozen examples now exist of communities built on relatively virgin land or of old communities notably expanded. No New Towns have been or are presently projected. Conflict has come in the area of local-national relationship, in the matter of industrial placement, in architecture, on the issue of rural conservation. Nevertheless the experiment remains a significant one.³

As to the churches in the New Towns, there is already a certain limited amount of comment available. At the outset the Reith Committee foresaw a definite and important church role in the new community:⁴

³ We recommend these three books to readers anxious for a longer look at the New Towns Program. Olans, Harold. *Utopia Ltd.*, Yale University Press, New Haven, Connecticut, 1953. Rodwin, Lloyd. *The British New Towns Program*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1956. Self, Peter. *Cities in Flood*, Faber, London, 1957.

⁴ Reith Committee, Op. Cit., p. 52.

The Churches therefore hold high place among the community builders. Whether regarded as guardians of ethical principles, interpenetrating the new community with the values derived from those principles, or as societies having a strong common bond and disposed to service, they are of vital importance in a new town.

And again: ⁵

If it were possible to establish some sort of council or conference of all Churches and religious organisations with which the development agency could cooperate in all these (i.e. socio-civic) matters, it would be of even greater value.

What church reaction has been to this invitation it is not possible for us to say with any finality. As we have already remarked, the material available to us in the area is limited. It would be extremely interesting to do a full-fledged professional study of the matter. Here, a few comments must suffice.

The situation, says the (Anglican) Rector of Crawley New Town, is ripe for church concern: ⁶

All new housing areas provide fresh opportunities for Christian evangelism and pastoral work. A family moving into a new house in a new district passes through some degree of psychological upheaval. Old habits of worship or neglect of worship may well be disrupted in the move, and the churches should be equipped to seize this moment.

The (Anglican) Archdeacon of Chichester spelled out to a St. Albans Diocesan Conference on the problems raised by the New Towns some of the things he felt vital in the individual parish approach: ⁷

The new towns are young communities . . . One thing is of vital importance—the Church must be in personal contact with the inhabitants of the new towns within the first day or two of their arrival. (The Diocese of Chichester) . . . has a whole-time Sunday school organizer for the (New) town of Crawley alone. (Besides there are) well-printed posters all about the town telling parents where to go if they want a child baptized.

⁵ Ibid., p. 53.

⁶ Butler, Rev. R.C. in "Town and Country Planning", January 1954, p. 30.

⁷ in "Town and Country Planning", November 1954, pp. 570, 571.

More recently, the (Anglican) priest in Hemel Hempstead New Town told British planners: ⁸

Integrating into the community is a psychological problem and in the language of religion a pastoral and spiritual one. And it is one which viewed solely from the sociological angle, the churches alone are wholly equipped to cope with, since their work is both with the body corporate and with the individual.

And again: ⁹

In Hemel Hempstead... the churches are playing a prominent part in the creation of the new communities of the neighborhoods and the new community of the town. Not only have their leaders (clergy and lay) helped to establish social organizations of all kinds, but they have taken an active part in creating coordinating bodies like the neighborhood councils and have often provided the first and subsequent chairmen for these bodies.

Collectively, in at least some of the New Towns, some of the churches have begun to talk and act unity. The Archdeacon of Chichester is blunt— "We find it very important for the Church of England to work as far as possible in close cooperation with the other Christian denominations." ¹⁰

The Rector of Crawley adds: ¹¹

When the denominations band together in a local council of churches the response of teachers, doctors, individual groups and so forth is much more cordial than it would ever be toward a single denomination acting on its sole initiative... The objective of planting the flag of Christ in the center of activity of the town is common to all of them, and a gentlemanly spirit of brotherhood between the local leaders of the denominations can achieve this without any loss of principle.

Just as final judgment cannot be written here on the New Towns Program, so it is impossible to draw ultimate conclusions on the role of the churches in it. As the church in America faces a changing community, perhaps what we have indicated above will be of certain comparative worth.

⁸ Stokes, Rev. Peter in "Town and Country Planning", February 1959, p. 84.

⁹ Ibid., p. 86.

¹⁰ Op. Cit., pp. 570, 571.

¹¹ Op. Cit., p. 321.

APPENDIX B

THE CHURCH AND URBAN RENEWAL

Once in the great Ages of Faith, we were the arbiters of society. Today, it could be, the road opens again before us. We can if we wish step forward as catalysts to ensure that, in the massive changes in our American community along with the hard-headed economic realities, full recognition is given to charity and social justice. It is hard to believe that Jesus Christ would have neglected the chance . . . And yet, perhaps, we have been too prone to sit down in our urban community without really opening our eyes to the most obvious problems of that community.¹

Shortly after his inauguration as President, Dwight Eisenhower called into being a presidential Advisory Committee on Government Housing Policies and Programs. This Committee reported on 14 December 1953:

The (proposed urban renewal) program must be closely integrated, comprehensive and meet the twin objectives of satisfying the demand of the American people for good homes and the maintenance of a sound and growing economy . . . A piecemeal attack on slums simply will not work—occasional thrusts at slum pockets in one section of a city will only push slums to other sections unless an effective program exists for attacking the entire problem of urban decay.

In the Housing Act of 1954, the Congress created "urban renewal" to enlarge existing concepts of slum clearance and "urban redevelopment." In the act of creation, the Congress reiterated its concept of renewal's purpose:

The Congress hereby declares that the general welfare and security of the Nation and the health and living standards of its people require housing production and related community development sufficient to remedy the serious housing shortage, the elimination of substandard and other inadequate housing through the clearance of slums and blighted areas, and the realization as soon as feasible of the goal of a decent home and

¹ the author in "The Catholic Charities Review", September, 1959, pp. 10, 11.

a suitable living environment for every American family, this contributing to the development and redevelopment of communities and to the advancement of the growth, wealth, and security of the nation. (Section 2, The Housing Act of 1949, as amended)

Since its initiation in so clear a housing context, urban renewal has taken its annual financing via housing legislation. This point is absolutely basic to a sound church approach to the entire program. If renewal was never intended to do the whole housing job, certainly it was intended to do or at least to stimulate the doing of an important part of it. In its conception, it had two correlative functions. One, it was to tear blight out of our cities. Two, it was to promote rebuilding in a manner calculated to meet the housing needs of our people. So significant was this latter aspect—i.e. the need housing orientation of the federal renewal program—that former Urban Renewal Commissioner David M. Walker took occasion recently in a city where renewal was being challenged precisely on this ground to issue one of the sternest warnings ever issued to renewal officials across the land:²

If urban renewal becomes a program with public housing down at one end and luxury and semi-luxury housing down at the other, leaving out a whole grey area in between, this program can go no place but into disrepute—and there it belongs.

We need not here detail fully the machinery of urban renewal. Literature is, increasingly, available. Basically what is involved is a federal-municipal cooperation into which private enterprise is invited with the aim of eliminating and checking the spread of blight in our urban areas. Procedure may be in one or in a combination of several ways. Total clearance calls for the levelling of an area where blight is so extensive that fix up is impractical. Rehabilitation calls for improving what exists to the point where the spread of blight is at least slowed down. Conservation consists in community measures to shore up neighborhoods proximate to but not as yet involved in serious blight. Before any city can secure renewal funds, a so-called Workable Program is required by federal law. This Program is seven-fold. It comprises assurance of long-range, city-wide planning. It spells out citizen participation. It gives assurance that the city is financially and technically able to shoulder the renewal responsibility. Two thirds of initial costs are met federally, one third locally.

² to the Potomac Chapter of the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials, Washington, D.C., 1 October, 1959.

To date there are few church studies of the urban renewal experience in depth. Our own study, "Crisis Downtown", was prepared in the summer of 1959. It deals with the nation's first urban renewal program in Southwest Washington, D.C. It makes no claim to infallibility. It does not, of course, apply in equal measure to each renewal situation. It does name names, cite figures and spotlight trends. It will give the churchman concerned with urban renewal a strong profile of some of the weak spots which have developed in it. "Crisis Downtown" is available, at \$1.25 per copy, from the National Conference of Catholic Charities, 1346 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington 6, D.C. Our subsequent testimony before the United States House Committee on District of Columbia Affairs was inserted in the Congressional Record and may be had from your Congressman. The reference is: Congressional Record—House, 1 September 1960, pp. 17549-17554, extension of remarks of Rep. Frank Thompson, N.J.

See also: Congressional Record—House, 21 February 1961, pp. 1093-1101.

Until recently the pace of renewal across the nation has been slow. But the future argues for vastly increased programming. Our cities are in real trouble. There is little time for academic calm as those responsible for them assess their tomorrow. With rising tax rates and shrinking tax bases, our cities can no longer afford the huge social and fiscal drain of the downtown slum. Business is increasingly off. Transportation is a many-headed monster haunting the rest of most mayors. Top leadership flees to the picture windows. Minorities congregate within sight of City Hall. Circumferential roads are more attractive to industry than downtown alleys. It is this situation which triggers the talk of metropolitanism. It is this situation which underlies the bitterness with which less wise city officials attack suburbia. It is this situation which in the decades immediately before us will make renewal more and more a burning issue and a frank necessity.

The first thing that must be said in seeking out a church position on urban renewal is that the record of this white hope of American urbanism has been to date in many areas controversial. The former Administrator of the Housing and Home Finance Administration (in which urban renewal is headquartered), Albert E. Cole, touched one of these areas with classic accuracy when he addressed the National Housing Congress in Washington, D.C., on 23 June 1958:

Urban renewal was not created because of the needs of the city, but because of the needs of the citizen. I suspect that if you went about the country asking various

people what urban renewal is all about, you would get a lot of different answers. You would be told that urban renewal is intended to save downtown business, or to clear up traffic congestion, or to restore worn-out areas to the tax rolls, or to create the City Beautiful, or to get rid of unsightly slum buildings. All of these things are worthwhile dividends of an urban renewal program. But none of them are the things that initially impelled the Nation to launch first the slum clearance and urban redevelopment program and later to broaden it into urban renewal. This program came into being because of people. It took account not only of the economic cost, but even more of the social cost of decaying neighborhoods and urban communities. This is what most of us used to talk about when urban renewal was starting. You don't hear much of that kind of talk anymore, and I think that's disturbing. As we get more and more involved in the demanding and complicated undertakings that urban renewal entails, we seem to have less time for the people whose hopes we are trying to fulfill.

Other areas of controversy have been pin-pointed in the notorious Title I situation in New York City. Lewis Mumford, long-time urbanist, Jane Jacobs of "The Architectural Forum", Charles Abrams sometime Rent Administrator of New York City, Professor Herbert Gans of the Urban Institute of the University of Pennsylvania—these among others have directed sharp question at present urban renewal practice. The point which emerges for the church is this. Each specific renewal proposal needs to be approached with circumspection. Claims must be sifted, fancy reports must be penetrated. Most significantly, perhaps, heavy emphasis must be directed toward the type of housing and the rent levels which will in fact obtain in the project area when all the smoke has cleared.

Our points are as follows:

POINT ONE—*Our basic attitude toward the idea of some form of urban renewal should be one of approval.*

By and large the situation is so serious in many of our core cities that only this type of drastic surgery seems an adequate remedy. We need to recognize too that for all the fanfare renewal is still a young animal. Even at this very elemental stage, however, two questions must concern the church. Will private profit ever accommodate itself generously to the given human purpose of the renewal operation? Are these early controversies in so many renewal cities growing pains or do they reflect dangerous

tendencies which, if allowed to continue unchecked, may warp the maturity as well as the babyhood of renewal?

POINT TWO—*We need to know much more.*

There is emerging from the presses and the conferences of the nation an increasing volume of comment on urban renewal. In many cities careful inquiries are being made. The renewers themselves are required by law to conduct public hearings, issue public reports and otherwise involve the citizenry in their plans. Through all these channels, an alert church can learn more about renewal in practice. If its choice is to be intelligent and objective it must learn more. In its search for knowledge, however, it must beware of half-truths, juggled statistics, partisan attitudes. It needs to be conscious too that renewal is by no means a total solution to all the problems of the American city. There is urgent need for deep and continuing study of urban sociology in both its historic and contemporary dimensions.

POINT THREE—*We need contact.*

We cannot relax in a cursory or sporadic acquaintance with the renewal giant. From fancy to fact the average urban renewal project goes through many stages. We must keep our collective and individual eyes to the keyhole. The alternative may well be self-deception, rash judgment. We require contact horizontally and contact vertically, contact with the renewal experience as it unfolds in the theorizing of the Congress, as it unfolds in renewal cities across the country, as it develops from sketch to site in each renewal situation. One aspect in particular where contact is vital is this matter of private-public relationships in renewal. One authoritative lady has described urban renewal in a certain major city as "a track for the gravy train." There are millions to be made in downtown civic readjustment. The pressure from business interests, politicians and the rest can be severe. As representative of the common good, the church needs to be alert all along the line. It is not a question of being against the politician or the entrepreneur or "business" or "labor." It is a constant question of insisting that the desires of the private individual must not obscure or compromise the larger rights of the commonwealth in the whole renewal operation.

POINT FOUR—*We need caution.*

We cannot as a church, in an organized chorus of urban lobbyists, ignore our clear obligation to take a total view, to survey the scene in terms not of what is good for downtown alone, but in terms of what is most advantageous for the nation as a whole. The church, in short, has no committed purpose to shore up the urban core. It may well be that socially a

brighter future is resident for the families of America in further decentralization, in multiple choice suburbia than downtown. It may be quite the other way around. The point is—the church must stand firmly on its freedom of judgment. There are misconceptions abroad; there are very powerful interests involved at every level of the typical renewal process. There is high level propaganda and high pressure salesmanship. The sole purpose of the church in renewal as well as elsewhere is commonwealth, is human finality. Better delay in pronouncements than hasty espousal of what is in fact not a common good position.

The following very serious judgment has just been made of the new federal highway program. We do not underwrite the judgment itself nor do we claim similar deficiencies in urban renewal. We do say that a judgment of this type clearly indicates the need for much vigilance on the part of the church as it faces any massive public-private operation. We do wonder what a similar investigation of urban renewal in every place it is presently operating would discover! Here, for what it's worth is one man's opinion of the federal highway effort to date:³

The dream has become a nightmare: of recklessness, extravagance, special privilege, bureaucratic stupidity and sometimes outright thievery . . . The first trouble is that Uncle Sam is paying most of the bill, with little control written into the law . . . So it's hardly surprising that with good old Uncle dishing out the cash, many a community has developed some pretty grandiose needs. Or that many a state official has developed an easy-come, easy-go attitude . . . Because of the rush to get at the federal moneybags, the mismanagement and waste normal to a program so sprawling and vast have been many times multiplied . . . With hasty mismanagement and local greed have come, inevitably, a third drain-collusion, chicanery, venality and graft . . . State and local administrations of both political hues have been reckless of public responsibility, have used roads and real estate to further their individual designs . . . Some will undoubtedly urge that we proceed full speed ahead 'for the good of the nation'. But perhaps it is time not to go ahead. Judging by the record to date, it is time to stop and evaluate . . . if that beautiful dream we all once had is to come true.

POINT FIVE—*We must cooperate.*

No matter how much we as a church may study and

³ Detzer, Karl in "The Reader's Digest", July 1960, p. 45 ff.

discuss we can never know as much about renewal as those whose profession it has become. The initial church approach then must be one of respect and patience. There are and always will be economic and political considerations to be recognized. We must accept this fact. Undoubtedly there will arise circumstances when protest in the common good is indicated, when pressures from one or another source seem to be resulting in a notable imbalance between fiscal-private profit and the human goals of renewal. Then surely the church must speak. For the rest, with other churches and with civic organizations and objective good will, the church can be an important middleman. Understanding the need and the honest efforts of renewal officials and private enterprise to meet it, the church can and should participate in neighborhood councils and city-wide groupings to interpret and to inspire the process.

POINT SIX—We need to take a much longer look at the nation's housing program.

Dennis Clark calls the national effort toward housing adequacy "patchwork programs constantly threatened." This is, undoubtedly, true and it has been true for decades under administrations of both political persuasions. The technical and political aspects of this are beyond church responsibility. The human aspect is not. Over-riding all other factors in the eyes of the church is the fact that for many years housing supply in America has not kept up with housing need. Today millions of American families cannot afford the cheapest housing available on the private market in the decent, safe and sanitary category; and there continue to be most serious doubts as to the adequacy of the present public housing program.

Suggested remedies for such a situation are many, loud and often emotional. Some say more subsidy is needed. Some call for continued increases in housing starts. Others remind the nation that there continue to survive what they feel to be serious inefficiencies in the whole "housing industry."⁴ It is not for us to issue final judgment. In a context of continuing controversy, however, we do suggest that the church reflect on these matters before plumping for any plan or panacea in the housing area:

i. The imbalance between housing supply and housing demand is not a new problem. It has been discussed many times in many places by many experts and many amateurs. Today as yesterday housing stands in a confusion of claims and

⁴ This includes, in our study, everyone from land speculator up through middleman, material supplier, construction labor, builder, mortgage financier—everyone connected with building.

counterclaims. It is difficult for the completely detached professional to give a clear picture of the situation. It is extremely difficult for the sporadic student to penetrate the propaganda and the statistics and arrive at the reality. There is need for study in depth, for caution, mostly for realization that this is no new problem and that any solution advanced to it has probably long since been discussed by professionals. We do well to probe the record of debate before we commit ourselves.

ii. Housing can no more be isolated from the facts of our present economy than can steel, education, transportation. We exist today in what seems to be unashamed inflation. Even prior to this inflation, however, there was pointed and responsible criticism of the "housing industry" as inadequate to the nation's need. It must not be forgotten either that huge sectors of our production are either directly or indirectly involved with construction. Any disorder here might well be reflected far beyond building operations alone.

iii. Various though it may be in its components, the "housing industry" is sentinelled by three giants—the real estate lobby, building finance and the cohorts of construction (and allied) labor. Any major action in the housing field, remedial or promotional, must reckon with the powerful vigilance of these giants.

iv. A sizeable reduction in initial housing costs would, obviously, be more significant than simply a reduction in carrying charges. It is probably correct to contend that a reduction at any given point within the "housing industry" might in itself be minor, but a combination of such relatively minor reductions might constitute a major break-through in the effort to lower shelter costs. To the thirsty traveller in the desert, a drop of water is hardly sufficient but each drop helps and enough drops will keep him alive. The church must look with suspicious eyes at pleadings which say that savings at this point or at that point within the "housing industry" would be too insignificant to bother about.

v. Any effort to subsidize the "housing industry" further, however it is spelled out, would almost certainly have an inflationary effect on the market. Even if it did not have such an effect, it would definitely operate to freeze in those inefficiencies and excesses which many responsible commentators claim exist within the "housing industry."

vi. Urban renewal in many cities has let the cat out of the bag as far as the general public is concerned. Professionals have known for decades that a tragic gap exists between housing supply and housing need. It is only in the heat of renewal debate

that this gap has been forcibly revealed to the nation as a whole. Millions are now aware that private enterprise cannot or will not build to accommodate the average American family. If the fault is complex, the reality is obvious.

vii. Public housing continues to be a controversial item among its supporters as well as among its opponents. If there is a general lack of enthusiasm for the "project", if methods for its improvement are still mooted among professionals, the fact remains and the church must deal with this fact. For many American families, and for a disproportionate share of America's minority families public housing seems to offer the only hope of physically decent shelter. If, increasingly, such housing fills with problem families off the renewal belt-line, this is cause for even more concentrated church concern and parochial solicitude.

viii. The so-called "filter down" or, more recently, "filter up" theory of housing is open to serious professional question. According to this theory, the housing market operates more or less on the same general pattern as the automobile market. Those with means to do so buy the new models, those without buy used models and everyone winds up with transportation (and, presumably, shelter) commensurate with their needs and pocket-books. In fact it doesn't seem to work out quite so simply. One Catholic housing expert writes: ⁵

The net results of housing filtering-down in many cases can be summarized in a simple statement. Go to the worst slum and see how much the 'filtering down' process has been an integral part of that slum development.

We do not propose here to resolve the debate over filtering. We do remark its existence and we do warn church social action leadership against accepting it as a serious solution to the nation's housing problem—at least without careful investigation of the record.

POINT SEVEN—Residential Relocation from urban renewal projects has been the subject of considerable controversy in several cities. In estimating the success of the relocation operation, the Church will want i) to beware of rumors and exaggeration ii) to judge relocation from any particular project in terms of total city readjustment iii) to recognize the existence of this serious controversy and before taking any position check facts against purported achievement.

We cannot here explore the record of relocation in urban renewal. We have already indicated what we feel should be

⁵ Phalan, J. Laurence. *Housing Problems*, Daughters of St. Paul, Boston, 1959, p. 200.

church reaction in the specific situation. Two notions seem basic. Decades back Harry Emerson Fosdick spoke of the woman who called the New York Police Department to complain that noise from the building of a new subway must be stopped—it was keeping her pet canary awake. In any massive civic readjustment, it's almost inevitable that someone will be hurt. There will, in most renewals, be complaints, individual hardship, many rumors. While sifting these carefully, the church will need to recognize the larger good of the project itself. Nevertheless, there is certainly place for church concern to minimize the hardship. An editorial feature in the "Washington (Catholic) Standard" during the urban renewal controversy in the District in the summer of 1959 spoke of relocation under this title—"For People not for Profits". There has been far too much smoke in this whole area of relocation for the church to accept glibly even the most official claims of success. The second notion is one we have stressed strongly in "Crisis Downtown." Urban renewal in most cities is a continuing operation. No responsible observer of this operation can afford to sit down with a column of figures showing apparent relocation success without asking three important questions:

- i. will the project in question increase the city's housing supply in areas of housing need thus substituting for the shelter it destroys new living accommodations for at least some of those it displaces?

- ii. has the federal requirement that relocation be accommodated in "decent, safe and sanitary" housing been in fact met or has the displacement been largely to new slum or near-slum areas in which those displaced become very shortly subject to a new renewal displacement?

- iii. have the initial, official or unofficial, suggestions as to the type of housing to be built in the project area been followed or varied? If they have not been followed, why not?

Again, the reader is referred to "Crisis Downtown" for further statement on this point. Suffice it here, without in any way seconding their judgment, to invite reader attention to two other recent studies of relocation. The one appeared in *The Journal of the American Institute of Planners* for February 1959. It was written by Professor Herbert Gans of the University of Pennsylvania and was entitled—"The Human Implications of Current Renewal Practise". The other is an unpublished Master in City Planning thesis on relocation from Boston's West End urban renewal project offered in the Department of City and Regional Planning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in June, 1960. Its author is Gordon Gottsche.

APPENDIX C

We repeat here, verbatim, the prospectus for a civic service program moderated by the author and offered in the spring of 1959 at Assumption College in Worcester, Massachusetts. Each course was two hours in length. Each course featured one hour of analysis and one hour with guest speaker. The program closed with a major civic forum on the Problems of Greater Worcester.

TOMORROW — U.S.A.

THE PLANS AND THE PROBLEMS!

- March 11 — Introduction, Yesterday and today U.S.A. The dimensions of change.
- March 18 — The Planning Process. Why, how, who? The English experience. "The Road to Serfdom?" Ebenezer Howard and the Garden City idea.
- April 8 — The City. How it started, how it grew. Its government. Its future.
- April 15 — The City. Urban Renewal. Public housing. What the automobile means to the city. Transportation (rail, air, truck—public transport).
- April 22 — The Suburb. Statistics and cynicism (analysis of pertinent literature). Ambiguity. Social and psychological factors.
- April 29 — The Suburb. What it means to the city . . . annexation, competition, metropolitanism? What it means to the farm and the country. A third force?
- May 6 — The small town. Its future in the metropolitan area. Self-examination (the Montana Study, etc.) Town manager. Regionalism.
- May 13 — Green Belt and the farm in the metropolitan area. Urban sprawl (Santa Clara County, California). English thinking on Green Belt.
- May 20 — Zoning and other community land and density controls. The Master Plan, the official map.
- May 27 — Regional Planning. The New York Port Authority. MDC. Trustees of the Reservations (the Bay Circuit). Dade County, Florida, versus Nashville, Tennessee. Toronto. The dangers, the possibilities.

* * *

This course is presented in the anticipation that it will meet a community need and will facilitate community service. It is meant to stimulate a broader and more informed consciousness of civic responsibility and the place of planning in our civilization.

Text: *The Exploding Metropolis*

APPENDIX D

NIAGARA DECLARATION

August 28, 1960

The following are recommendations made to the National Catholic Social Action Conference by discussants in its Workshop on Housing and Planning and read at a plenary session of the Conference on Sunday afternoon, August 28, 1960. They do not *in any way* commit the Conference, nor were they presented to the Conference in motion form and so voted. They stand in the nature of a report. They have been phrased in this rather than in the usual manner because the discussants, and particularly those whose names are appended thereto, feel that the need for further Church action in the related areas of Housing and Planning is imperative.

* * *

1. We are firmly convinced of the need for a continuing Church apostolate in the two vital areas of City and Regional Planning and Housing. We recommend that this apostolate should, ultimately, be structured on the national, diocesan and parochial levels.

a. We recommend respectfully to Their Excellencies, the hierarchy of America, to the Social Action Director of the National Catholic Welfare Conference and to the directors of other national Catholic groups concerned in the area of civic readjustment that special attention be devoted to these matters, to research, and to dissemination of information thereon.

b. We recommend that each diocese consider the creation of an office or agency which will be charged with evaluating problems of City and Regional Planning and Housing. We further recommend that teams of competent persons, e.g. housing and planning experts, priests, teachers, social workers, and lay apostles in the area of civic change, be prepared in order to explain the issues particularly of urban renewal and conservation to parochial societies and other Catholic groups; and that parish priests be encouraged to take part in community councils and to have their parishes exert the influence in community change of which they are singularly capable.

2. We urge as soon as possible that a faculty of City and Regional Planning be established at an American Catholic university of major standing. Such a faculty could focus on the concept of Planning as it relates to the Natural Law, and would permit us to channel our young men and women into vital vocations in the area of civic change. It would, eventually, operate to put at the disposal of the hierarchy an increasing volume of research material relevant to the whole area of the changing American metropolis. We also recommend that Catholic colleges and universities seriously consider the possibility of conducting workshops and public seminars on the problems of metropolitan society.

3. In this as in other phases of the apostolate we must remain free from any continuing commitment to specific programs to the extent of identifying ourselves with a particular political party or economic group. We must cooperate without being captive. Our goal must be always and solely the welfare of the nation and the community as a whole.

4. We are of the opinion that identification with a local community of some kind is indispensable for the proper development of the family and for the social support of which families stand in imperative need. The local community is, further, necessary for the proper flowering of the parish as the primary cell in our supernatural society. We, therefore, urge City and Regional Planners to conserve existing neighborhoods wherever possible and in planning new developments to arrange for the physical individuation of new communities. We, further, insist that the welfare of the family as an institution should be a controlling consideration in housing policies and programs.

5. We urge, ultimately, the preparation of codes of ethics for Catholics operating officially in the area of community change. We recognize that it will be difficult to spell out these codes. We feel, nevertheless, that there exists an urgent need for them as soon as we are technically competent to create them.

6. We recommend the development and establishment of community councils as an effective means of arriving at civic consensus and for promoting desirable change; and we particularly urge Catholics to participate in such councils both as individuals and through their organizations. In this connection, we recall the repeated admonitions of the Holy Fathers urging us to cooperate with all groups in matters which concern the common welfare of the community.

7. We note with serious concern the fact that the housing needs of a substantial proportion of American families are not

being adequately met. We note, without in any way committing ourselves, that responsible critics in this area have claimed:

a. that the "housing industry" is archaic, that the costs of land are often excessive, that the construction process is not efficient, that material costs in housing are too high, that financing is unnecessarily speculative, that certain restrictive practises within the construction trades contribute to un-necessarily high priced housing. In this connection, it is also contended that conflicting and antiquated building codes sometimes seriously interfere with the effort to keep housing costs down.

b. that federal housing policy is uncoordinated, filled with gaps and discords; that the constituent agencies within the Housing and Home Finance Agency do not coordinate their programs on the federal, regional and local levels relative to various phases of the so-called national housing program.

c. that the urban renewal experience in too many cities has demonstrated serious inadequacy in the area of relocation.

We urgently recommend further Church study and research in the area of each of these criticisms.

8. We are satisfied that the civic situation in most of our Standard Metropolitan Areas is not good. We suggest a new method of organization within these areas. We do not spell out such a method. We do urge that it take full account of existing and projected population masses within such areas not only in terms of political noisiness but, more importantly, in terms of actual numbers on the ground. We are, further, aware of growing sentiment for some sort of federal direction in our Standard Metropolitan Areas at the Cabinet level. We favor such a step. We urge, however, and not alone for semantic reasons, that the new department be known as the Department of Metropolitan Affairs and that it accord full proportional representation to the core city, suburban communities and the residual rural pockets which may survive in a given metropolitan situation.

9. We respectfully note the need for continuing contact between Catholics, lay and clerical, across the land who are working in the areas of Planning and Housing. Last year at the Third Annual Convention of the National Catholic Social Action Conference in St. Louis, Missouri, this workshop recommended to the Conference the creation within itself of a Department of Planning and Housing. Such a Department now exists. Last

year, too, we recommended the need for some form of committees of correspondence, citing the experience of the American Colonies in the pre-Revolution period, to coordinate our efforts and to inform each of us what others among us are attempting and accomplishing. We repeat this recommendation now.

10. We are keenly aware of very serious problems in the area of interracial housing. For lack of time, our workshop did not adequately explore these problems. We urge, however, the need for continuing competent Church study of them.

11. We respectfully call the attention of Church leadership to the existence of problems in civic readjustment and community change both in suburbia and in our core cities. Some of these problems overlap, some are similar, others are peculiar to suburb or city. There is need for a closely coordinated, parallel but not subordinated, approach to and study of civic readjustment downtown, in suburbia, in our rural communities and in all three as part of an increasingly metropolitan America.

Signed for the Workshop on Housing and Planning:

Chairman of the Workshop: Rev. Robert G. Howes
Diocese of Worcester, Massachusetts

Master in City Planning, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Recorder of the Workshop: Mr. John Burke
Portland, Maine

Housing Rehabilitation Specialist,
Bayside Urban Renewal Project

Mr. Dennis Clark
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Author: "Cities in Crisis": Human Relations Commission, Phila.

Mr. Stanley Jonas, Sr.
ACTU, Gary, Indiana

Mr. Robert McKay
Renewal Specialist, Chicago, Ill.

Rev. Gerard Murphy, S.J.
Professor of Sociology
St. Peter's College
Jersey City, N. J.

Mr. Americo Nemiccolo
Planning and Recreation
Consultant
Marlborough, Massachusetts

APPENDIX E

OPERATION COMMUNITY

QUESTION 1: WHAT DO YOU INCLUDE IN THE TERM—COMMUNITY RELATIONS?

ANSWER: The title itself is quite arbitrary. It seems most nearly to describe those areas of social action in which I am here concerned. There is no point in quibbling over semantics. In the end another term may prevail. For now I include in my definition these specific items, among others:

i. relationship between the churches of America in so far as these relationships contribute to the relevance of religion in the changing American community (excluding, of course, from purview doctrinal, liturgical, "dialogue" relationships).

ii. cooperation of the Catholic Church corporately and in its individual manifestations (i.e. local clergy, parish and diocesan lay organizations, the Catholic press, Church colleges) with forces making for good human Planning in our American communities singly and collectively.

iii. Church action vis-à-vis the civic moral obligation resting on lay Catholics to concern themselves with the commonwealth. Specific reference here to the magnificent statement of the American Bishops in November of 1960.

iv. Church action vis-à-vis the moral aspects of such matters as public housing, good private housing, urban renewal, Master Planning, zoning, inter-racial justice.

v. stronger interpretation to our young people of the importance of service vocations in terms of the changing American community (this in traditions already effectively pioneered by the Christophers).

QUESTION 2: The Church has been existing in the American community for many decades now. ARE YOU IMPLYING

THAT OUR PRESENT PATTERN OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS IS NOT ADEQUATE?

ANSWER: I am not only implying this. I am stating it, without prejudice to anyone, as an absolute fact. By and large across America this is the present state of things:

i. Our silence in the related fields of housing and Planning is nearly unanimous. Both Rev. Andrew Greeley of Chicago in his "The Church and the Suburbs" and Dennis Clark of Philadelphia in his "Cities in Crisis" concur in my judgment here.

ii. We have a continuing apostolate in and to the civic community only at exceedingly rare points in our organizational and educational structures.

iii. Our young people are definitely *not*, as a matter of continuing policy, being alerted to influence vocations in terms of a critically changing American community.

iv. In many communities, while our neighbors of other faiths rally to causes of commonwealth, Catholics—officially and otherwise, are notoriously reluctant to cooperate.

v. We have often (and noisily) been concerned to save our own material skin, to take a negative stance, to fight for our own pound of flesh in civic readjustment. There is too little evidence of positive ad hoc interest on our part in practical aspects of good Planning in our communities. There is need in every age for re-examination of the relevance of religion in the community. There is a particular need for such re-examination today:

i. Our continuing strictures against "secularism" demand a positive philosophy and attitude on the part of the Church vis-à-vis community change.

ii. We have ceased to be a small minority, immigrant, ghetto Church. We have important (and influential) parishioners; we have major press and educational instruments: we are members of a Church which repeatedly through its Popes has called for the "restoration of all things in Christ."

iii. Change in the American community at this moment is so serious, so widespread, so filled with moral consequences not only for our own but for succeeding generations that there is imperative need

now for moral guidance and for the clear and continuing voice of commonwealth.

QUESTION 3: ARE NOT COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN ANY CASE PRIMARILY THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE BISHOP AND, SECONDARILY, THE RESPONSIBILITY OF SEVERAL ALREADY EXISTING CHURCH APOSTOLATES?

ANSWER: Ultimate responsibility and direction for this as for any apostolate within the Church must, of course, rest with the Pope and the Bishops. The centralization of Community Relations activity within one apostolate, however, far from diminishing will rather strengthen and multiply episcopal authority. A Community Relations Department at the diocesan level, which is the kernel of my proposals here, will no more impinge on the rightful decision and authority of the Bishop than, in another area of Church concern, does the existence of a Youth Department at the diocesan level, or a Charities Department at the diocesan level, or a diocesan press. Quite the contrary, such a Community Relations Department would operate to:

i. provide the Bishop (and his line agencies) with important background material for judgment in cases calling for community action.

ii. represent the Bishop at events and in circumstances which he may find it impossible to encompass in a busy schedule, or at which his personal presence might for some reason be deemed inadvisable.

iii. permit the continuous ramification of episcopal policy in civic change to the individual clergy, to line departments in the diocese and to lay organizations.

iv. offer a ready vehicle for inter-faith cooperation (of QUESTION 1, i above) in the civic interest. This would in no way eliminate the possibility of "summit" conferences as between various church leaders. It could, however, importantly lay the foundation for and prepare the detailed framework for such conferences.

The responsibility for the relevance of religion in the community will always rest to varying degrees with organizations and individuals within the Church structure. A Community Relations Department would be charged *not with superseding but with complementing and coordinating other church work* in terms

of total impact in and on the changing American community.

In general, though, it seems reasonable to suggest that the entrance of other Church apostolates into the community relations area has often been a matter of fringe effort. For want of any specific instrument, the Bishop has called upon one or another diocesan unit or individual to fill a vacuum. Result has been lack of coordination, sometimes a serious gap in our community apostolate. Besides, matters requiring technical competence and continuing vigilance have had to be handled at times by well-meaning but untrained personnel whose main concern lies elsewhere.

QUESTION 4: IS NOT WHAT YOU ARE SUGGESTING A SOCIAL ACTION APOSTOLATE?

ANSWER: Once again, I do not propose to get bogged down in semantics. Technically this is social action. It is entirely possible that our approach to it will ultimately be marshalled within existing "Social Action" mechanisms within the Church. As a matter of record, however, "Social Action" in the American Church seems to have been closely associated with labor-management. It is a matter of considerable initial importance that we enter this area of Community Relations with no commitment, real or reputed, to any particular sector of or concern in American economic or political life. Labor-management is a vast problem in itself. The Community Relations Department I propose will have to work with many agencies and individuals representing all manner of commitments in the community. It must be restricted in its frame of reference only by the moral needs and purposes of the community as a whole.

QUESTION 5: OF WHAT, SUBSTANTIVELY, ARE YOU SUGGESTING THAT A CHURCH COMMUNITY RELATIONS APOSTOLATE SHOULD CONSIST?

ANSWER: A few ideas only! Once we have accepted, corporately and individually, the principle that there is such a thing as the civic interest in which the Church can and must be concerned (and that this is *not* "politics") then much of the subsequent operation will have to be played by ear. Here are one or two basic points:

i. The Church should be vocally represented at important civic gatherings at which the future of the community is being discussed and this beyond (though in some cases necessarily including) problems of self-interest.

ii. *At the earliest feasible moment, a department of city and regional planning should be established in an American university (Catholic) of major standing.* This Department would begin to fulfill two important functions (among others)—i) it would provide training for Catholic (and other) young people in Planning with a strong Natural Law fundament. ii) it would research major moral problems in civic change, in the process producing and disseminating material of assistance to the Church locally and nationally as it faces up to the changing American community.

iii. It would seem both at the national and at the local (and regional) levels that it might be advisable to consider further the creation of inter-faith conferences which shall concern themselves, exclusive of "dialogue" and reserving an ultimate freedom of judgment to each participant, with the common good of the community.

iv. An important share of sermons, literature (e.g. editorials), and organizational emphasis should be given over in the Catholic sector of the community to civic obligation (e.g. the superiority of the common good, attendance at Town Meetings, support for good Planning, sharing in urban renewal hearings).

v. A constant advisory check needs to be maintained of the overall Church situation in each community. Is the Youth Council, for instance, neglecting the welfare of the community in which it subsists? Does the Catholic Mens' Group provide a forum for community discussion? Would an episcopal statement be helpful at this or that point in terms of community impact? How can the Bishops' statement of November, 1960, be implemented? Are Catholics taking part in such community discussion areas as Mental Health, Problems of the Aging?

vi. There is a great danger in the changing American community today of overlooking "the big picture". Decisions are taken with little or no reference to the future civic whole. The Church, concerned for moral-

ity in society, must think out for herself what type of metropolitan tomorrow might be best from the point of view of family life in America say in 1990 and then insist that at least this goal be repeatedly enunciated and that each specific be judged in relation to it.

QUESTION 6: OF WHAT, TECHNICALLY, ARE YOU SUGGESTING THAT A COMMUNITY RELATIONS DEPARTMENT IN A DIOCESE SHOULD CONSIST?

ANSWER: I am suggesting that we consider the creation in each diocese of a Community Relations Department as an important step toward the solution of the problem delineated in these pages. To be effective this Department will have to operate *on the staff of the Bishop* rather than as a line (v.g. Catholic Youth, Catholic Men) apostolate. I suggest:

i. that this Department, as an ideal to be sought after in any case, should include both lay and clerical personnel. It is not the purpose of this paper to explore the relationship which ideally should exist between lay and clerical Catholics in social action apostolates. My own personal judgment here, however, is that it would be wisest to associate in leadership of the Department a competent (i.e. technically trained and responsible) priest with a competent layman final decision, however, resting with the priest. The Department after all will be engaged in a delicate, novel and often official operation. Lay association should, however, be far from perfunctory and, in the absence of trained clergy (a situation which at least in the early days of a Community Relations apostolate will no doubt be widespread) careful lay leadership may well have to be controlling.

ii. that in its initial operation the Department will want to rely heavily on all means of communication available to it (v.g. the diocesan press). It will be embarked on a difficult and novel business. *It will require careful publicity and frequent notice if it is to be effective.*

iii. that closest liaison will be required from the outset with the Bishop. Likewise great tact and patience will be needed to permit full blending into already existing organizational patterns in the diocese. The

Department needs to recall again and again in these early efforts that *its principal function is to advise and not to command.*

iv. that the importance of specific episcopal support of the Department at the outset (e.g. in the form of letters to the clergy, mention at official functions) not be overlooked.

v. that every occasion be utilized to spotlight events occurring at the local community level which demonstrate alert community relations and good Planning.

vi. that Operation *Pay* (Program a Year) be initiated early in the Department's existence. This Operation will suggest to lay organizations (through their established diocesan directors) that at least one program a year be devoted to some problem of the local community with attendance desired and invited from all citizens of the community regardless of religious affiliation.

vii. that the priest in charge of the Department, when the ideal is reached, must be given adequate time and generous understanding so that he may organize an effective apostolate. Once he has secured technical competence, he will have to operate on a schedule and in a framework somewhat unique in the diocesan Church. Conferences, social sessions with important community figures, Communion breakfasts, articles in the local press—these as well as office work and formal lectures will comprise a vital part of his apostolate.

viii. that care will have to be exercised from the outset lest the Department degenerate into a self-interest activity. It is understandable that the Department will from time to time be called on for advice as to some problem of Church survival or change in a given situation. By and large, and this must be jealously defended, the Department must concern itself not with what we can get out of the community but with what we should be putting into the community.

Note: The above material originates in the office of Community Relations of the Diocese of Worcester of which the author is occupant. It was prepared to facilitate brief presentation of certain important aspects of the problem at hand.

POSTSCRIPT

While this manuscript was in preparation, a number of pastorals and articles appeared in the American Church generally related to its subject matter. One such article was in the form of an editorial appearing in "America" and cited by "Time" in its issue of 10 February 1961:

Shouldering our (i.e. Catholic) share of the common day-to-day work of America. Look for this in hundreds of ways . . . You can expect to find Catholics turning up in all sorts of places . . . on all the citizens' committees heretofore they frequently seemed to shun—committees to clear slums, organize municipal orchestras, build new wings on public libraries, raise money for the Red Cross, and all the rest.

As for the pastorals, already in "Crisis Downtown" we had urged:

We hope that current community crises across the land will continue to suggest to Their Excellencies, the Bishops of America, singly and collectively, the desirability of pastoral pronouncements in this vitally important field.

It will be impossible here to catalogue all the pastorals or all the articles. Nor will it be possible in these pages to note all related events. Suffice it in this final category to spotlight one occurrence of major significance. In February of 1961, the Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Men in Washington, D.C., held its annual convention. It took for theme—"The Role of the Catholic Layman in Community Planning and Redevelopment." Further information on this historic session can be had from Rt. Rev. Monsignor George L. Gingras, Archdiocesan Representative for Urban Renewal, St Augustine's Rectory, 1717-15th Street, N.W., Washington 9, D.C.

For the rest we content ourselves with a brief inquiry into three pastorals.

In November of 1960, the Administrative Board of the National Catholic Welfare Conference on behalf of the cardi-

nals, archbishops and bishops of the United States following their annual meeting at Washington, D.C., issued a strong statement on "The Need for Personal Responsibility." Copies may be obtained from the National Catholic Welfare Conference, 1312 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington 5, D.C., at a cost of \$1.25 per hundred, \$9.00 per thousand. There is no uncertainty about this trumpet. In one breath, the hierarchy proclaims a serious moral weakness in the American people and the need for spiritual renewal on an individual basis. Problem areas are closely and frankly catalogued. The conclusion re-affirms the right of churchmen to occupy themselves with the changing American community. "The correction of these basically moral evils and the restoration of a vigorous sense of personal responsibility belongs primarily to the field of religion."

In the text, we have already made brief reference to a pastoral issued in the Archdiocese of Boston in Lent of 1960 by His Eminence Richard Cardinal Cushing. This pastoral was entitled "The Christian and the Community." It may be obtained from the publishers of the present volume. "I think it opportune", says His Eminence, "to set forth some considerations to guide the free action of the Christian in the world . . . I am conscious that the Church is a complex, living organism, and that at any given time in history it must survey the context in which it finds itself and offer new directives for the care of souls." And again—"We do not truly discharge our civic duty unless we interest ourselves in all the movements which the community finds needful for its purpose. We should not merely be resigned, but should be glad to have opportunity for responsible stewardship." Here, too, the relevance of religion in a changing community is strongly affirmed.

In Lent of 1961 another pastoral issued from the Cardinal Archbishop of Boston. This one bore the title "Moral Values and the American Society." It too may be had from the publishers of the present volume. If possible even more than its brilliant predecessor this pastoral underlines the role of religion in civic life:

It is then principally through the personal religious commitment of each citizen, through his own ready acceptance of the place of spiritual values in his individual life and action, that religion can be made to penetrate the various areas of society which cry out for

this benign influence. We must be prepared continually to reassert the primacy of the spiritual and the overstriding claims of God upon our total human life. This means that the moral dimension can never be absent from our public acts or civic experience.

And again:

Christianity, once the center of gravity of our civilization, is today a peripheral activity. At work, in leisure, in political, social, sexual, educational, professional and family interests, the mass of the modern community is almost without trace of Christian values. Christianity is external in our community; it is remote, detached, unrealized . . . We, the Church, must repenetrate the modern community from which we have been largely isolated. The community will not come to us. We must go to it.

These few pastorals, we stress again, are but straws in a wind that seems to blow louder and longer in the American Church. Their excellence of construction, the esteem in which their reverend authors stand, give them a certain prominence, of course; but the important fact is that they exist and that they seem to be part of a growing trend.

Reflection on this development is necessarily limited in a postscript. One point, however, needs to be made. If it be objected that all this is in fact nothing new in the Church, that we haven't had to wait for the serious sixties to discover the community around us, one would have *prima facie* to concur. There have been Suhard's and Leo XIII's in the Church before. JOC-ism is nothing new, nor Family Life, nor CCD. The difference and the telling advantage of this late crop of material is that it comes not from isolated spiritual writers or in learned journals or to specialized apostolates but rather in bread-and-butter language to all Catholics from leading pastors and leading laity of the flock. There is the added difference, and this is by no means unimportant, that our situation in the American community has changed. We are now perhaps more ready, as "America" puts it in the editorial referred to above, certainly we are more competent to shoulder our common good responsibilities than we were yesterday. Another difference, at least with some of the predecessor effort, is that ours is a total approach. True, we still have our particular apostolates—inter-racial

justice, labor-management, for instance. But by and large, the pastorals and the articles range over a wider area, call for overall civic responsibility rather than specialization. It almost seems surveying the thing chronologically, as if the "dabitur vobis" is peculiarly active in our time in our nation. By a felicitous combination as Catholics emerge into position of influence and competence in America their leadership more and more probes the moral context of our changing American communities.

In the last analysis, of course, the pay off is on action not words. The real question remains—what effect will these magnificent pastorals actually have on the social mores of American Catholics? What follow-up was in fact prepared for the Bishops' statement of November 1960 in dioceses and parishes and church schools across the country? Will the pastorals and the articles be read? Or will some doctoral student look back from the twenty-first century at our time and at our Church and say sadly—the fault, it seems, lay not in their stars but in themselves that they were underlings?

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